

## THE WIDOW'S DAUGHTER.

BY ELIZA WALKER.

"Time, faith, and energy, are the three friends God has given the poor."

*BULWER'S Night and Morning.*

It was towards the close of the busying month of April; but, though early in the spring, the weather was bright and bracing—one of those days which, from their clear, delicious freshness, give added buoyancy to the step, strength and elasticity to the spirit—when the boon of mere existence is felt as a joy and blessing, and the heart, forgetting the shadows which past grief or impending calamity fling over it, breathes un-mixed aspirations of praise and thanksgiving to the Author of all good! How appropriate, then, was a day like this for the long-projected *fête* at Morton Grange! What was it commemorative of? Were the nuptials of the young and lovely the event celebrated? The birth or majority of an heir recorded thus by joy and festivity? It was neither of these occasions which collected all the *élite* of —shire into one focus. It was to mark the recovery from long and dangerous illness of Eva, the only child of the proud and

pompous owner of Morton Grange—a young, still feeble, ailing girl of fifteen. The successive deaths of five other children, the long period which intervened between the demise of the last of these and the birth of little Eva, had made her to her parents an object, it might be said, almost of idolatry. Such affluence of love was scattered over her path, so fenced in was she by the eager, watchful care of parental affection from the common casualties of peril and danger, that when, despite the vigilance exercised, disease struck her down, and the glad laugh was exchanged for the low wail of anguish, the bright glance dimmed by the films of sickness, the appalled parents started as from a dream. What, then, was she, the only and beloved, whom they had so cherished and caressed, hurrying, like their other little ones, to the dreary grave? There was agony almost to madness in the thought. All that consummate medical skill could effect was rendered; all that ceaseless, unremitting attention accomplish, offered. Heaven was besought with earnest, supplicating importunity, to spare their treasure; and Heaven listened to their prayers! The fever of delirium faded away, and the thin hand pressed once more in recognition the mother's fervent clasp; the pale lip wreathed into a faint smile on the fond father, who bent breathlessly watching each varying turn of the ashy

face. Eva was pronounced out of danger; convalescence rapidly followed; and when entire recovery was established, every friend on their visiting list was eagerly bid to share in the exuberant joy which filled the whole household of Morton Grange, from its imperious master to its humblest retainer. And was Eva worthy of this prodigality of love? In truth she was. Not only did her face and figure give promise of singular and exquisite loveliness—not only in the large deep-blue eye, whose dark lashes swept a cheek round and fair as sculptured marble—not only in the black shining ringlets which clustered round that cherub face, were there beauty and expression; but in every modulation of the low, sweet voice; every movement of the small rosy mouth told of the mind that dwelt within, of the warmth and sensibility of the heart beating in her young bosom. If ever there was a nature from which every taint of selfishness, that poisoner and corrupter of human motives and actions, was banished—if ever one utterly exempt from that cold, calculating worldly wisdom which, fettering the nobler and more generous impulses, shapes each deed in accordance only with hard systematic policy, it was that of Eva Morton; sensitive, truthful, trustful, with the ready tear for any suffering, the open hand for every distress, the radiant smile for others' joy, the keen sym-

pathy for humanity in all its varied aspects, from her parents, to her the first objects in creation, down to the bird and dog which fed from her hand, to the smallest insect which crawled in her path, the loveliness of her nature was developed and exhibited. The voice of harshness, the tone of reproof, never yet had met her ear. When she should be doomed to listen to these, how would her soft, but vivid and kindling temperament bear the bitter novelty !

The *fête* at Morton Grange was in no respects dissimilar to the thousands that have gone before it, or the thousands by which it will be succeeded. The appointments where the outlay of money is the last point considered, and over which exquisite taste presides to direct and design, could scarcely fail to be good. Under the superintendence of Mrs. Morton they were perfect ; for in all matters appertaining to dress or decoration, whether persons, rooms, or gardens, were to be embellished, that lady's *artistical* skill was equally displayed, and was ever unimpeachable and faultless. On this occasion, when her heart was filled to overflowing with rapture and thankfulness, there was a peculiar pleasure in tasking ingenuity to its extremest limit in manifesting, by every outward symbol of splendor and gaiety, the feelings which possessed her. The result was quite satisfactory, even to her fastidious eyes, and

those of the five hundred guests, partakers of the festivity. Among these there were none peculiarly noticeable. There was the usual amount of match-making mammas, pretty marriageable daughters, and handsome well-dressed men, on whom to practise the authorized artillery of smiles and glances; much rivalry, much scandal—for, alas! in this country, even when “two or three only are gathered together,” never is this most odious *accessory* banished; much *make-believe* love-making and a little true; divers well-bred and appropriate compliments to the lady of the house; and a superabundance of caresses and flattery to the little invalid, the heroine of the day; with many speculative guesses as to what would be the probable amount of her fortune at the death of her father. Nor was it only the wealthy and influential who were called to eat the “fatted calf,” to rejoice at the preservation and recovery of Eva. Every tenant, every cottager on Mr. Morton’s estate, whether tottering with age or helpless through infancy, were invited to participate in the general demonstration of delight and pleasure. But to Eva nothing gave so sweet a joy as receiving from the children of her own Sunday school their small offering of fragrant flowers, and rendering in return some pretty gift or toy.

But time still leaps onwards to eternity!

Whether the hours be chronicled by the dial of joy or despair, unnoted, or bitterly, wearily counted, pass they must !

The *fête* ended amidst bonfires blazing, music pealing, and fireworks glittering. The guests retired to their respective homes ; some with heartaches, which the next morning's sun should chase away ; others, it may be, with impressions of a deeper, perhaps indelible, character. As if to mock at the instability of all human pleasure, and show to the proud and exulting how slender is the barrier which divides happiness from misery, and that "in the midst of life we are in death," when the next sun shone upon Morton Grange it dawned upon a heap of smoking ruins ! Whether the fire which, in a few short hours, laid the stately fabric in dust and ashes, was the result of carelessness or the work of an incendiary, was never clearly demonstrated. Destruction, total and complete, was the consequence, whether accident or design had been the originating cause. Whilst every inmate was buried in profound slumbers, overcome by the fatigues of the preceding night, they were roused to consciousness by the fearful announcement that a portion of the house was in flames.

A young officer, on a visit to the rector of the village, who had risen early in order to reach the first railway train which should convey him to

London, from whence he was to embark with his regiment for the East, was the first person who gave to the horrified inhabitants announcement of the peril which surrounded them. The wind, which howled in terrific gusts, assisted the work of devastation, and they had barely time to escape with their lives, ere the noble mansion was blazing in every part. And Eva, where was she? The tidings of her danger sufficed to fling her instantly into total insensibility. Her parents, wild yet helpless, through excessive fear, rent the air with their screams; but the very abundance of their agony seemed to render them impotent to direct, powerless to save. The domestics, intent on self-preservation, obeyed its instinctive impulse, and sought but their own safety. And she, the beautiful and beloved, might in a few moments have been a blackened corpse, but for the heroic exertions of Cyril Vernon, (the young officer before alluded to,) who, on hearing that she was yet in the house, only waited to ascertain the situation of her chamber, and, regardless of the flames which were gathering around him, rushed to the apartment where the gentle child lay lifeless and motionless, snatched her in his arms, covered her carefully with his cloak, and succeeded, despite the imminent peril which threatened both, in placing her, unharmed, unscathed, in her weeping mother's caressing arms.

Time would not permit the intrepid Cyril to wait to receive the fervent blessings poured on his head; he had only a moment to breathe a prayer of thanksgiving to his Maker, who had preserved him and made him instrumental in saving the precious young life of Eva; and, ere she had unclosed her eyes to consciousness, he was again on his route.

Morton Grange, then, existed no longer, and it was the commencement of a train of successive casualties and evils, which ultimately plunged the family in sorrow, poverty, and ruin. A few days only subsequent to the conflagration of his house, Mr. Morton was called on to bear a yet more heavy calamity. Engaged to an enormous extent in speculation in the funds, he accepted the success which had hitherto attended his schemes as an augury and earnest of its perpetuity; but the tide of fortune, as is frequently the case, ebbed suddenly and ceaselessly. Political events darkened and convulsed the horizon of the "money market;" a rapid and ruinous fall in the funds was the consequence, and the hapless Morton found himself not only beggared but involved in liabilities to the amount of thousands, which not the mortgage of every acre he possessed, not even the sale of the family jewels and plate, would avail to discharge. Maddened, desperate, cowardly, he staggered beneath the new



and overwhelming evils which met him on every side, and, instead of waiting for the helpful, healing aid of the "time, faith, energy," which one of our first living writers has so exquisitely denominated as "the three friends God has given to the poor," put a pistol to his head, and became a suicide!

The brief limits of a tale forbid us to follow step by step the declining fortunes of the devoted family of Morton. The widow and her daughter found—as, alas! to the discredit of human nature, experience has ever proved—that the summer friends of prosperity fly with the first indication of penury's wintry chills. They gathered together the small remnant of property, which, after the payment of all debts, yielded but a poor pittance indeed: and, leaving the scene of their former splendor forever, proceeded to London. They entered the vast metropolis of the world, as hundreds do daily, without aim, resources, or friends! It was now, and ever since the shadows of adversity had encompassed them, that all the beautiful points in Eva's character more prominently developed themselves. Though but a child still, such events seemed to have forced into sudden and perfect maturity the wisdom and intelligence of ripened years. She saw her mother, weak in nature, even in affluence, now absolutely helpless in grief and indigence, with only tears and sighs, and useless lamentations, to meet the

evils which surrounded them, succumbing feebly to the accidents of the moment, without purpose and exertion for the present, or faith and confidence for the future. To add to their already "huge calamities," an attack of rheumatic fever laid Mrs. Morton on a sick bed, and deprived her temporarily of the use of her limbs; and thus was she made doubly dependent on the energies and capabilities of her youthful daughter for support. They had established themselves in a small lodging in Somers Town, as a cheap and obscure locality; but, though the rooms they tenanted were meanly and scantily furnished, and at a low rent, yet how were the swiftly recurring weekly payments to be met, with all the other incidental expenses? Of the money they had brought from the country, a large part had been consumed by the long illness of Mrs. Morton. To the few feminine occupations which in this country give bread (how often little else!) to those who require and seek it, Eva's tender age presented an insuperable barrier. Who would take a child of scarcely sixteen as teacher and instructress? Her surpassing beauty, also, would have retarded rather than have advanced the probability of meeting with an engagement of the kind, even had her years qualified her for the task.

The construction of fancy articles for the bazaars, after days and nights of ceaseless rumi-

nation to poor Eva, was the only medium that suggested itself to provide a roof and maintenance for her afflicted mother and self. In the scorching heat, the wintry snow, was the once pampered and delicate child of luxury and pomp compelled to traverse the streets, to procure implements for her work and purchasers for it when completed. She who had commanded wherever she moved, had now to sue for direction and employment from the hard, the ignorant, and the coarse-minded. But she repined not if success were the reward of her endeavors and labors, and they procured—the dearest boon!—the means to purchase some coveted dainty for her sick and querulous, but fondly loved mother. For herself, she cared nothing; her fare the scantiest, her dress the simplest, toiling from the early dawn to the midnight chime, yet no repining word, no fretful murmur, ever escaped her lip: she confided in Him who “cares for the fatherless,” and trusted at His own good time the “three friends he has given to the poor” would effect her deliverance from the bitter thralldom of poverty. But, alas! incessant labor, broken rest, exposure to all weathers, worked their effect upon the delicate frame of Eva Morton; day by day her step became feebler, her eye more dim: still the same amount of work must be completed, or they would fall into arrear. Hardly could she drag her tot-

tering steps to bazaars and shops, where she disposed of her pretty merchandise. But she did. The mighty force of will, the strong sustaining impetus of a holy duty, combated with physical weakness, and gave her the power to *do*, when thousands, beneath the paralyzing influence of health so shattered, would have sunk in helpless and prostrate despair.

It was after a morning more than usually harassing, when weary hours had been spent profitlessly in endeavoring to dispose of her little wares, that Eva, on her homeward path, took her route through the Regent's Park, hoping that the fresh clear breezes from the Highgate hills might, at least temporarily, brace her. It was the height of the London season, when, at certain hours, all the Parks present so gay and animated an appearance.

The bright sunshine, the glittering equipages, the smiling faces, all were in sad contrast with the pale-faced, sorrowful girl, who was crawling, rather than walking, along the broad thronged path. A nursery maid with two children, one an infant in arms, the other a beautiful boy of three years of age, were amongst the pedestrians. The baby dropped the toy it held in its tiny hand; the servant stooped to recover it, and at the same instant, the boy, in pursuit of an Italian greyhound which accompanied them, rushed into the

midst of the drive where the carriages were rolling carelessly along; another minute and the child would have been crushed under the wheels of a britscha, when Eva, who saw the boy's imminent danger, at the risk of her own life, and with a strength which, in her debilitated state, was almost superhuman, dragged it from the road. But, in her efforts to avert mischief from the child she herself received a blow from the pole of the carriage, and she had scarcely placed him unharmed on the footpath ere she fell bleeding and senseless on the ground. To summon the carriage of the grandmother of the boy, which was a little way in advance, explain the nature of the accident, lift the lifeless Eva into the vehicle, and convey her to the nearest surgeon's, were events that followed in instant succession. The injuries she had received were found to be on examination of a trifling nature. She was driven to her humble lodging, promising to call on Mrs. Leslie, the relative of the child, as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, and receive again and again her grateful thanks. But weeks passed ere Eva could do this,—a long and severe illness followed the event narrated above. Not uncheered, not unsolaced, however, was her sick bed; Mrs. Leslie, ascertaining the straitened circumstances of the being who had saved her idolized grandchild from death, provided every

appliance and accessory which generosity and wealth could supply to mitigate and relieve the sufferings of Eva. Finding, on a near and constant intercourse with her, the beautiful piety her character exhibited, she offered, on her recovery, a permanent asylum to herself and mother in her house in Curzon Street. And when the period of convalescence arrived the offer was accepted, Eva becoming the instructress of young Arthur. The mother of the boy (Mrs. Leslie's only daughter) had died in giving birth to an infant, now only a few months old ; his father was with the army in India, and the whole charge of the children devolved on Mrs. Leslie, whose love and wealth made her qualified for the task, but who labored under the affliction of total blindness. It was, therefore, with joy she found one so competent, so gentle, so accomplished, as Eva, to associate with her in the care of the children committed to her charge. And in another way also was Eva able to minister to her gratification. Gifted with a voice of exquisite beauty, music with Eva in her palmy days had been joy, almost passion ; so was it also with Mrs. Leslie, and being incapacitated by her infirmity from indulging other sources of pleasure, she leaned on this one for solace and amusement. To listen to the songs she had loved in early youth, breathed by the sweet and birdlike voice of Eva, was a source

of intense and unfailing delight. Perhaps in the locality of Mayfair no house possessed a circle where the inmates amalgamated better together, or were more tranquilly happy, than were gathered under the roof of Mrs. Leslie in Curzon Street. The disposition of Eva, serene, hopeful, unshaken in adversity, when the shadows had faded which once darkened her path, resumed the buoyancy and radiance which distinguished it in early youth. Hers was the temperament which not only is a boon to its possessor, but diffuses over a whole household its beneficent and genial power. Whether romping with the children, singing to her old blind benefactress, or combatting with loving words and sunny smiles the peevishness of her mother, she was equally at home, equally resistless. But there was soon another being on whose destiny she should exert a mighty and abiding influence—Captain Stewart, the father of the children, arrived from India. “Truth is stranger than fiction.” He that has proved—and where is he who has *not*?—that our common, every-day life is characterized by passages of such romance that the novelist would scarcely dare invent, will not marvel that in Captain Stewart Eva identified the heroic Cyril Vernon who bore her in his arms from Morton Grange on the night of the conflagration. For the life he then saved she had almost an equiva-

lent debt of gratitude to place to his account. His first-born, now in all the pride and beauty of healthy boyhood, had escaped an abrupt and painful death through her intrepidity. And so it is: retribution and reward, even in this world, are dealt out to us according to the deeds we have wrought far more evenly than many admit. Captain Stewart, on the death of a bachelor-uncle in India, had succeeded to his property, and assumed with it the name of his relative.

The reader will guess the sequel. Captain Stewart, after being domesticated under the same roof with Eva, soon found that his riches would avail little as ministrant to his happiness, unless shared with the gentle Eva. Fortunately she reciprocated his feelings, and the bright and blissful courtship of a few months was ratified at the altar of St. George, Hanover Square.

Eva Stewart, while basking in the light of undimmed prosperity, never forgot the deep and solemn lesson she had acquired while treading the thorny path of poverty and sorrow,—that “her feet had well-nigh stumbled,” that she would have been overborne by despair, had she not remembered and confided in the promise, that “time, faith, and energy, are the three friends God has given to the poor.”



## **WHITE THORNE FARM.**

**BY MISS AGNES STRICKLAND.**

**LUCY MARLOW** was the eldest daughter of the wheelwright, whose neat workshops and well-stocked yard occupied an open space at the entrance of the village. There were seven in the family besides Lucy; but **Isaac Marlow** was a thriving mechanic, and his children constituted a part of his wealth; for his five sons assisted him in the various branches of his craft, which comprehended not only the construction of wheels, but every description of agricultural carriage, from a wheelbarrow up to a wagon. **Isaac Marlow** had lost his wife, but her place in the household department was well supplied by the active exertions of his daughter **Lucy**, who conducted the whole of the domestic affairs, assisted by a stout girl of fourteen, who had been apprenticed to her father from the workhouse. **Polly Jones** was an awkward, uncivilized creature when she first arrived; for the children reared in workhouses are seldom instructed either in useful knowledge or decent behavior, which is the reason why they are so often harshly treated by the persons to whom they are allotted. Such chil-

dren are indeed deeply to be pitied, generally speaking; but little Polly fell into kind hands; and though at first she was very stupid, and broke many things from not having been accustomed to handle glass and crockery ware, Lucy, by the exercise of a little patience and forbearance, and some judicious encouragement, succeeded, in the course of a few months, in converting her young dependent into a valuable coöperator in her household labors, and in consequence gained time to educate her two little sisters. She also bestowed instruction in reading, writing, and sewing, on Polly, of an evening when she had finished her allotted task, and the morning business went on all the better for this indulgence. Polly soon became a brisk, handy, intelligent girl, and all the neighbors congratulated Lucy on her good luck in meeting with such a treasure, not considering the pains Lucy had taken to render her such.

Lucy was of a serene and cheerful temper, and the inward sunshine emanating from a mind at peace with itself, and the constant practice of virtuous though often laborious duties, gave brightness to her eyes, lightness to her step, and a sweetness of expression to her countenance, far more attractive than beauty. Lucy was, however, very prepossessing both in her manners and person, and her dress was always so exquisitely

neat, that she was universally admired when seen, which was but seldom, beyond the precincts of the productive little garden that had been created partly by her own exertions on a slip of waste land between the dwelling-house and her father's yard. Seldom did any young farmer in want of a wife ride past on his way to Scrapeton corn-market, without pausing and thrusting his own, and of course his horse's, head and neck over Isaac Marlow's gate, as if to contemplate the merits of the carts, rollers, and gaily painted wagons, that were drawn forth in that yard to tempt the agricultural purchaser; but, truth to tell, more glances were directed towards the rows of cabbages, lettuces, or it might be the tall lilies and flaunting sun-flowers, that flourished in the trim garden in the background, where Lucy Marlow sometimes might be seen engaged in her horticultural pursuits, assisted by her little sisters Jane and Anne. But, notwithstanding these errant glances, Lucy had attained her twenty-third year without any other token of the power of her charms, and it was the opinion of Lucy's five great brothers that Lucy would be an old maid; moreover, one of them had the incivility to tell her so.

"I hope it will be for the benefit of my family if I am," was Lucy's meek reply; "but, in truth, Hodge, I hardly know what my father and the

little ones would do without me if I were to marry, of which, as you say, there is at present little chance," she added.

The fact was, Lucy had never given the slightest encouragement to those who were willing to attract her regard, because her heart had been secretly won by the silent but unmistakable attentions of a young man, who she feared would not be permitted by his friends to consult his affections in the choice of a wife; for Charles Rushmere was the eldest son of a man of sordid habits, who had amassed a considerable property by farming, and considered the increase of riches as the only duty in life.

Old Mr. Rushmere lived in a distant parish, but had purchased a fine farm at Woodfield for Charles to employ himself in cultivating for their mutual profit. Charles Rushmere was a young man of excellent morals, benevolent, handsome, spirited, and industrious, farmed in what was considered a good style, rode well, and was reckoned the agricultural Adonis of the village. All the damsels in his degree were disposed to set their caps at him, and their mothers said, "Poor Mr. Charles Rushmere must lead a very dull life at Whitethorn farm without any one to take care of him except old Sukey Scratchit, his house-keeper, and it would be quite a charity to ask him to tea in a friendly way now and then." So

poor Mr. Charles Rushmere was charitably invited to tea-drinkings in the parish, too numerous for us to record, and all the "young ladies," as per courtesy the daughters of the farmers and shopkeepers of Woodfield were called, did their best in turn to make impressions on the heart of the handsome heir of the rich old miser of Scrapeton Grange.

Between Michaelmas and Christmas, Mr. Charles Rushmere had heard all the jingling-piano-fortes, and assisted in turning over all the blue and pink and orange-colored leaves of all the rival scrap-books in Woodfield, and stared at all the monstrous cupids, pincushion-roses, lapsed butterflies, and gaudy groups of oriental tinted flowers and bad prints they contained; also, he had with astonishing want of tact yielded obedience to sundry hypocritical entreaties *not* to read some halting rhymes to the honor and glory of the respective owners of these show-off volumes. When Christmas came, Mr. Charles Rushmere was invited to a series of dances both public and private, at which he enjoyed the felicity of exhibiting his locomotive powers with every damsel in Woodford successively, except the only one whom he considered worth a second thought, and that was the meek and modest Lucy Marlow. But Lucy never went to dances or gay tea-drinkings; her time was so fully

occupied with the duties of her father's household, and the instruction of her young sisters, besides taking care of her brothers' linen, that she never had a moment to spare for other recreation than the cultivation of the garden, and sometimes a quiet walk in the meadows with her father, sisters, and her little maid, on Sunday evenings after church.

Charles Rushmere sat in the next pew to that which was occupied by the honest wheelwright and his family, and soon got into a similar habit of rambling in the meadows after they came out of church, "to help him to digest the sermon, and get an appetite for his tea," as he facetiously observed to Isaac Marlow, as if to account for this practice. The wheelwright, who had his eldest daughter, and pride and delight of his heart, on his arm, and had observed that their new neighbor's eyes had been oftener turned on her sweet face than on his prayer-book during the service for many Sundays, had his own ideas on the motives of Charles Rushmere in joining them in their family walk; but the young man was so respectful and engaging in his manners, and confined his discourse so entirely to himself or the little girls during these rambles, that Isaac Marlow had no pretence for offering an objection to his company on such occasions. One evening, when they reached Marlow's gate, Charles

Rushmere said, "I should consider it a great privilege if I were permitted to make one at your tea-table to-night, Miss Lucy."

Lucy looked down and replied, "That it was one of the rules of their family not to admit of Sunday visitors, because the evening of that day was devoted to the religious instruction of the children and the maid."

"Perhaps," observed Charles, with some degree of pique, "I should be equally unwelcome on any other evening?"

Lucy blushed and said, "That must depend on what her father thought."

"My good sir," said the wheelwright, "we are only members of what may be considered the working class, and you are the son of a rich man, one who is said to make some claim to the rank of a squire, and would probably consider us very much beneath you; therefore we must decline your company as a visitor at our humble board."

After this conversation, Charles Rushmere ceased to join the wheelwright and his family in their Sunday walks. He even went out of church by another door, and for three months looked at his book all prayer time, and at the parson during the sermon, instead of bestowing his devotions on his fair neighbor. Lucy began to think it would have been well if he had never

done otherwise, for she considered that Charles Rushmere ought to have respected both her father and herself the more for the motives which led them to decline his overtures ; and so Charles did really, but, like many other lovers, he had anything but an agreeable way of receiving a necessary repulse. Then he got angry and jealous on the score of the bachelor agriculturist whom he saw bestowing so much more attention on Isaac Marlow's carts and wagons than he considered at all requisite, and at last took the resolution of ordering one of those two-wheeled farming carriages yclept in East-Anglian parlance a tumbril, as an excuse for obtaining admittance into the domicile over which the wheelwright's pretty daughter was the presiding genius. Charles Rushmere chose a Saturday evening, after he had paid his people, as the time for this important transaction, partly in the hope that he might find Lucy alone, and partly with a half malicious intention of catching the young housekeeper in that state of confusion with regard to the domestic arrangements which in Suffolk is expressly called a *muddle*. But Lucretia herself, when her excellent housewifery was put to the test by the unexpected visit of her lord and his royal companions, appeared not to greater advantage spinning and carding among her maidens than did the wheelwright's fair daughter sitting tranquilly by



the bright fire and clean hearth of the freshly-swept and garnished stone kitchen, in her neat brown merino dress and plain white collar, superintending and assisting in darning the hose of the males of the family with her sisters.

Any of the "young *ladies*" of Woodfield would have been ready to faint at the idea of being surprised at such vulgar employment. Lucy certainly blushed, and allowed her ball of blue mottled-yarn to roll from her lap to the other end of the kitchen, but her confusion proceeded from pleasure at the sight of the unexpected visitor, not shame at having been discovered in the performance of one of her duties. Charles instantly rescued the ball from the impertinent playfulness of a sonsy pet kitten that had just pounced upon it, and presented it to Lucy with the air of a Paladin.

"You find us very busy," said Lucy, as with a downcast glance she received this little act of attention; "but we always finish the week with our odd jobs."

"Lucy," said little Jane, "I do think Hodge always makes such a great hole in the toe of his stocking on purpose. I never can mend this."

"Then give it to me, dear, and run the thin place on the foot of Robert's sock. That is easy work for you," returned Lucy.

Charles cast an observing glance on Lucy's

proceedings, and thought how differently Sukey Scratchit would have conducted herself if he had presumed to wear holes in his stockings of such provoking magnitude for her Saturday evening's amusement.

"Hallo, Lucy! are you giving the young squire a lesson in darning stockings?" cried Isaac Marlow, in surprise, as he entered, on perceiving Charles Rushmere's curly head peeping over his daughter's shoulder, his lips pursed up, and his round, blue eye intently fixed on the process of crossing the villanous hole in the toe of Hodge's Sunday hose.

It was now Charles' turn to blush, and he did blush scarlet red as he stammered out, in a genuine Suffolk whine, "Mr. Marlow, sir, I hope you will excuse me, but I have come to talk to you about a new 'tumbriel'."

"Certainly," said Isaac Marlow, rubbing his hands, "that is a very excusable offence; but why did you not come to the workshop at once, where you were sure of finding me?"

It did not suit the young man to explain his reasons; so he said, "he could go and look in the workshop then, if it suited Mr. Marlow."

"No," said Marlow, "we have shut up for the night, and to-morrow is Sunday; but I shall be very happy to receive your order, Master Charles,

or mayhap I have a tumbril in the yard that may suit you."

"I will come and talk farther on the subject on Monday," said Charles, casting a glance of intelligence at Lucy.

"Then be pleased to come to me in the workshop or yard, if you do," returned the cautious father, who had detected the telegraphing between the lovers.

"It is not every farmer who enters this house who is willing to order a new tumbril of you, Mr. Marlow," rejoined the young man.

"Mine honored customer, there is a time for all things, and a place too in my business for receiving orders, and that is the workshop, where I shall be very proud of waiting on you."

Charles was inwardly malcontent at Isaac Marlow's independent way of doing business with him, and half disposed not to give his order at all, especially as he was in no particular need of a new tumbril, and he knew his father would consider such a purchase a great piece of extravagance. However, he recollected that it would afford him a very plausible pretext for loitering in the precincts of Lucy's dwelling, if he were not permitted to enter it. So, on the Monday morning, the order was given, and once a week at least he put on his smart green shooting-frock and bright-colored leathers, and walked into the

wheelwright's yard with the free and easy air of a person who had now a right to come there, and inquired "how they were getting on with his new tumbril?" Marlow's sons thought this an exceedingly good joke; but the wheelwright shook his head, and replied at last, "not the better for your coming so often to trouble us about it, Master Charles, and we are making all the haste we can to get it off the premises."

Charles considered this observation very uncivil, and in return caused as many artificial delays as he could, by commanding a variety of alterations, and changing his mind twice or thrice as to the color he willed it to be painted, and all for the sake of standing opposite Lucy's window while he discussed these points, which were considered by Isaac Marlow as very blamable innovations in the orthodox plan of building tumbrils. All the farmers who were accustomed to look over Marlow's gate thought so too, and the fancies of young Charles Rushmere about his new tumbril became at length the talk of the three adjoining parishes. In due course the report reached the ears of Mr. Rushmere senior; and one bright morning, when Charles, regardless of Isaac Marlow's repeated intimations that his tumbril had long been finished and ought to be removed, entered the yard with the intention of suggesting another alteration, he found his father

standing before the said tumbrel, and surveying it with a sarcastic countenance.

"I have done myself the honor of coming from Scrapeton Grange this morning," said he, "to look at this precious article, which has afforded a theme for so many flattering remarks on the wisdom of my eldest son."

"I hope, sir, that it meets with your approbation," returned Charles, endeavoring to assume an air of nonchalance.

"No, sir, you don't hope any such thing; for you know me too well to suppose I can approve of such needless folly and extravagance," retorted the old man, with an ireful glance; "and pray," continued he, "how do you think it is ever to be paid for?"

"I shall pay for it out of my share of the profits of White Thorne farm."

"Oh, you will, sir? Then let me tell you that if you turn my liberality to so poor an account, you shall have no farm to gain any profits from another year, but your brother Frank shall come to White Thorne farm, and you shall return home to take the laboring oar at Scrapeton Grange under my own eye."

"As you please, sir," said Charles.

"No, sir; it is not as I please, for Sukey Scratchit, whom I sent here to take care of you and your house, tells me that you are tired of her,

and want to bring home a wife to White Thorne farm."

"She only tells you the truth, sir," rejoined the young man. "I have bestowed my affections on the prettiest, the most sensible, and the most industrious girl in the parish, and if you are the good father I have ever had reason to consider you, you will not oppose my wish to make Lucy Marlow my wife."

"Very fine talking, but I have not labored all my life to gain wealth that you might throw yourself away on a beggarly wheelwright's girl," replied the elder Rushmere; and taking Charles by the arm, he led him out of Marlow's yard. Charles could have wept with shame and mortification at the thought of such a scene taking place there—within hearing of Lucy's brothers, too! Fortunately, Isaac Marlow was absent that day purchasing timber, or the taunts of the sordid rich man would not have passed unanswered. There was a cloud on his brow when he sat down to supper that night, for his sons had related the particulars of this annoying affair to him, as they had before done to Lucy. Lucy's eyes were swollen with weeping. Her pride and delicacy had been deeply wounded, and she feared she had incurred her father's displeasure; but she had no cause for apprehension. Isaac Marlow was a just man and a kind parent, and when

she came to kiss him before they parted for the night, he patted her cheek affectionately, and said, "Cheer up, my Lucy; you have been a good girl and a prudent one. No one has been to blame but Charles Rushmere, in playing such boy's tricks about that foolish tumbril, and perhaps I was worse than he for taking his order. However, the tumbril is a good one, and I shall dispose of it to another person; so that need not trouble old Rushmere."

The next day Isaac Marlow wrote word to Charles Rushmere, "that, as he understood his father disapproved of the order he had given him, he had sold the article to a fancy farmer from London, and hoped he would have no farther uneasiness about it."

"I hope he may dispose of his girl to the fancy farmer from London, as well as the tumbril," was the elder Rushmere's obliging comment on honest Marlow's communication. Charles turned pale with vexation; for the fancy farmer, who was the son of a rich London mercer, and had recently turned an ancient farm-house into a modern Gothic cottage, with a Grecian portico, ornamented in the Egyptian style, had created a far greater sensation among the rural nymphs of Woodfield than ever Charles had done, and he feared he might prove a formidable rival in the heart of Lucy during his absence from the scene.

The elder Mr. Rushmere insisted on his giving up White Thorne farm for the present to his brother, and returning to the Grange. Mr. Rushmere had cause to repent of this arrangement, for his son Frank, instead of bringing him either rent or profits from the farm, pursued a headlong career of dissipation as soon as he found himself in some degree his own master, formed an intimacy with the fancy farmer from London, ordered his clothes of a Bond street tailor of his recommending, set his father and Sukey Scratchit at defiance, gave convivial parties at his bachelor abode, and at the end of a couple of years deeply involved himself in debt, and finished his career by breaking his neck at a steeple-chase, which, as Sukey Scratchit consolingly observed to his father when she communicated the tragical event to him, "was the most *sensiblest* thing he had done since he came to live at White Thorne farm, and very convenient for his family just at that time, for if he had only lived another week, he was going to marry the sister of the fancy farmer's housekeeper, a very unworthy character as she understood ; and then," pursued she, "all the money you have been *scrubbing* (Suffolk for scraping) together would have gone, you may guess where ; for poor Master Charles aint likely to want it long, as I guesses by the look of him ; and so, as I say, it 's all as it should be, and you



will have plenty of time to look about you for an heir after poor Master Charles is dead and his *fineral* is over."

"Does the woman mean to drive me mad by telling me of the death of one of my boys and the funeral of the other in the same breath?" exclaimed the miserable rich man of Scrapeton Grange.

"Why, lauk, sir, don't put yourself out with me, pray, for I'm sure I meant no offence by just giving you a hint, now we are talking of the death of Master Frank, that you ought not to set your mind too much on his brother, for if you have n't noticed his horrid bad looks, and his tisicking cough, all the three parishes have, and they all lay the blame on your shoulders, 'cause they say he is breaking his heart for the love of Lucy Marlow and the loss of White Thorne farm together, and you would have been a happier, and, more than that, a richer man, if you had let him have them both, say I."

"Why, you vile old pick-thank, whose fault was it that I ever heard a parcel of tales about my son Charles?"

"Your own, to be sure, sir, for lending an ear to a set of envious serpents who came to set you against your own flesh and blood."

"Were not you at the very head of ear-wigging me, you deceitful old hag?"

“What, I, sir!—well, it is a fine thing to have some one to lay your evil deeds on. As true as I’m alive, I always said Master Charles was my favorite, and well he might be, for a nicer, quieter young fellow in a house I never waited upon. Always home and in bed by ten o’clock; always up by five in the morning, and seeing after his men, and worked harder than any of them. We had no harum-scarum doings with him. He had set his mind on a proper good girl, and that was what kept him so steady, for he bore in mind king Solomon’s proverb, ‘a virtuous woman is a crown of glory to her husband’s head.’”

The awful termination of Frank Rushmere’s reckless career caused much excitement in the parish of Woodfield, but a more general sensation of sorrow was created by the pale and melancholy appearance of Charles Rushmere at his brother’s funeral.

Lucy’s brothers told her he was certainly in a deep decline, and Lucy, instead of sleeping, bathed her pillow in tears that night. The next day was a beautiful May morning; the sun shone brightly, the bees were humming gaily among the newly-opened flowers in Lucy’s little garden, and the birds carolled forth their songs of joy in the white-blossomed cherry-trees, and the old elms that overshadowed the dwelling;

her young sisters were playing with their pet-lamb on the grass-plot, and the kitten frisking round them. Everything seemed cheerful and happy except poor Lucy.

"And now," said she to her father, after the rest of the family had gone out from breakfast, "it is worse for me than if I had permitted Charles Rushmere to court me."

"Not so, my Lucy; you have obeyed your father, and your conscience is free from offence," replied Isaac Marlow. "Have patience, Lucy, and things may even yet work together for your good."

"Ah," said Lucy, "how is it to be if Charles Rushmere dies?"

"He is worth many dead men yet," returned her father.

Lucy was glad to busy herself in putting away the breakfast things to conceal her tears. While she was thus occupied, her sisters came running in, crying, "Oh, Lucy, Lucy, what do you think! —old Mr. Rushmere has sent the drollest, high-backed, old green shay-cart you ever saw, to fetch you to Scrapeton Grange this morning."

"Has he sent it for me?" exclaimed Lucy, turning pale. "Are you sure of that, Anne?"

"Certainly; the old man who has come to drive you told us so, and begged that you would come as quickly as possible, for his master did

not wish him to lose half a day's work if it could be helped."

"Father," said Lucy, "may I go?"

"Go, my child," replied her father, "if it is your wish."

Jane had already flown to fetch her sister's Sunday bonnet and shawl, and Lucy, who was always neat, tarried not to make any change in her household garb; but almost before Mr. Rushmere's envoy thought she had been made acquainted with the nature of his errand, she came forth in readiness to obey the welcome summons. Jonas gave her an approving smile, and nodded to himself as she took her seat in the antiquated vehicle by his side; and as they jolted and rumbled together out of the yard, Polly Jones testified her lively sympathy and good will towards her young mistress, by throwing an old shoe after her for luck. Lucy was half way on the road to Scrapeton before she could command her voice to ask old Jonas how Mr. Charles Rushmere was.

"Lord love your heart, he'll do well enough now, I'll warrant him," was the cheering reply of the sagacious driver.

"Then he is not dying?"

"Oh, lauk, no, miss! nor half so bad as I was when I was crossed in love fifty years ago. I tell you what, miss, I have heard of some young

women as have fretted themselves to dead for *sich* like ; but men ar' n't so tender-hearted : for, you see, miss, they has other things to occupy their time and thoughts. Not, miss, but what our young master have vexed *hissself* good tidily about you, and so our master thinks, or else he would not have bundled me off so early this morning to fetch you. But our Sukey is partly to be thanked for that, for she put it into his head that Master Charles would have a *faver* or *information* of the heart with fretting so about you, miss. Master fared very queer, I promise you, when he heard that on the night after his other son's funeral too. 'So,' says he, 'there's a real physichshin from London now at the Angel, what came to see old my lord, and-we'll hear what he thinks of Master Charles ; run, Jonas, and tell him to step this way.' So I gived the doctor a bit of a hint as we comed along ; and when he had felt our young master's pulse, he looked wherry solemn, and shaked his head. Says he, 'It is all in the heart, which have brought on alarming *simpkins* of another *natu*, for which I must write a *description*.' Then our master, when he had got the description made out, though he could not read one word of it, was forced to give doctor a golden guinea ; for this was a real physichshin wot was staying at the Angel, you know. Well, the *description* did our young master no good at all,

as how should it? Then says old Sukey, says she, 'I can give you the best *description* for Master Charles, after all, only you won't be ruled by me sir, I s'pose.' 'But,' says master, 'Sukey, I *wool*, if you are sure it won't be too late.' Then says she to master again, 'While there's life there's hope, and to be sure you won't be a *Barbarous* Allen to your own son, now he's like to lie on his young deathbed?'

"Master took her meaning, and told me to get out the old *shay*-cart, and brush it up a bit, which was only decent for me to do, for it had stood on one side in the cart-shed ever since our mistress' *fineral*, and the hens had got to roost along the high back of it, so that I had fine work to clean it up, as you may s'pose; and when I had got it a *little* tidy, and dusted the cushions, he ordered me to go and fetch you, Miss Lucy, the first thing in the morning."

Jonas had never in all his life met with an auditor who listened to his prosing with the interest the lovelorn Lucy bestowed on his narrative.

When Lucy arrived at Scrapeton Grange, she felt some trepidation at the anticipation of an interview with the father of her lover, but Jonas, as if guessing her thoughts, said, "Apray, miss, don't go to frighten yourself about our master, for it ain't at all likely you 'll see him."

"How so?" demanded Lucy, in surprise.

"Why, our master is a very queer old fellow, but I says nothing."

Mrs. Sukey Scratchit now came forth in her clean starched muslin apron and high-crowned cap, to receive and welcome Lucy, and to act as mistress of the ceremonies in ushering her into the presence of her sick lover.

Charles Rushmere, when the weeping Lucy approached the old-fashioned settee on which his emaciated form reclined, drew her gently to him, and whispered,

"She came ; his cold hand softly touched,  
And bathed with many a tear ;  
Fast falling o'er the primrose pale  
So morning dews appear."

"Ah, Charles, if you only knew how often I have cried over that ballad of late !" sobbed Lucy, in the fullness of her heart.

"If you please, Miss Marlow," interrupted Mistress Sukey, putting her head in at the door, "master desires his compliments to you, and hopes you will excuse his dining at home to-day, if so be as you and Master Charles can make yourselves comfortable to dine together alone on roast fowl, with white bacon and egg-sauce, and a bread pudding, at one o'clock."

"Mr. Rushmere is very kind, I am sure," said Lucy.

"And remarkably considerate too," added

Charles, with a smile. "Tell him we are greatly obliged to him, and shall be very comfortable without him."

"Laik, Master Charles, he knows that well enough; and that is the reason he goes out to-day," rejoined Mistress Sukey.

My readers may imagine how swiftly and happily the hours fled away till six o'clock arrived, when Mistress Sukey again made her appearance to announce that the shay was at the door in readiness to convey Miss Lucy home.

A few days afterwards, Charles was sufficiently recovered to be able to ride over to Woodfield to return Lucy's visit, which his father intimated to him would be only a civil thing. At the end of a month, Charles was reinstated in the occupation of White-Thorne Farm; and a few days after, Mr. Rushmere called at the wheelwright's house, where he found Lucy very busy kneading bread, while Polly was heating the oven. The old man condescended to commend Lucy's method of making up her loaves, asked for a mug of beer in order to ascertain her skill in brewing, gave a scrutinizing glance at the general neat appearance of the kitchen, and then walked off to the workshop, where he abruptly informed Isaac Marlow "that his business with him was to hear how soon it would suit him to spare his daughter to be his son's wife."



· “If you ask me when it would suit me to spare my Lucy, I should say never,” was the reply of the fond parent, “for she is my greatest comfort on earth; but as it is her happiness, not my own, I should think of, I suppose I must make up my mind to part with her as soon as one of her sisters is old enough to take her place.”

“No, no, Mr. Marlow, my son wants his wife home before harvest; and if he can’t have her now, I shall make him take some one else, (that is *if* I can.) But I had better send him to talk to you about it, for she seems to be the sort of girl to suit us.”

That very day Charles came and pleaded his cause so movingly to the father of his Lucy, that Isaac Marlow consented to their immediate union.

· Lucy was loth to leave her father with so young a housekeeper as Anne, who was scarcely twelve years old; “but then,” as she observed, “both Anne and Jane were very handy, and had learned many useful things of her, and Polly was now seventeen, and had got into nice neat ways, and she should herself be living near enough to come and help them on baking days, and any other times when they required assistance or advice.”

So the matter was settled, and on midsummer

**day Anne and Jane officiated as bridesmaids to their happy sister, and Polly Jones, not the least delighted of the party, gained a new gown and white ribbon from the bridegroom.**

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## FAR FROM THE HUM OF MEN.

AN intimate friend of mine in Paris, the Vicomte de —, inhabited for fourteen years a pleasant *entresol* in the Boulevard des Italiens. Young, rich, and healthy, he enjoyed life as only those favored mortals do whose purses are crammed with bank notes and whose limbs are untouched by rheumatism.

In the first year of his eighth lustre the viscount suddenly remembered that eight times five make forty ; and one fine evening, coming out of the Café de Paris to go to the opera, he in like manner acquired the bitter certainty of the fragility of human things. Lobster salad had lost its flavor ; Meyerbeer no longer pleased the ear nor Fanny Ellsler the eye ; and my young friend felt that he could easily play the part of the great St. Anthony in the midst of the seductions of the French metropolis. He reëntered his apartments, superintended the immediate packing of his furniture, placed "To let" in his balcony, took a conveyance for the north, and on the 1st of May settled himself in a charming little villa

about a gunshot from my house, a very nest of shade verdure and flowers. Though this paradise was his own property, he had never before visited it save about once a year when he did not happen to prefer Switzerland or Italy.

"My dear friend," he exclaimed, the first day he called upon me, "I am now one of you. I have left far behind the whirl of the modern Babylon, where they manufacture joys as they fabricate Seltzer water. I shall henceforth live for myself and a few friends. I return to natural pleasures—to a calm and real existence; and my last sigh will be breathed beneath the old ancestral oaks, far from importunate fools, from deceitful man, and doubly deceitful woman. In short, far from the hum of men."

By the 2d of May my new neighbor had bought a spade, two rakes, four watering pots, and a pruning knife; he had likewise furnished himself with sundry jackets of coarse cloth such as the peasants wear, and headgear to correspond. Dispensing forever with varnished boots, he purchased a pair of sabots fit for any weather, and at length considered himself at all points a country gentleman.

The first day of his installation the sixty peasants who formed the male population of the hamlet on the estate arrived, with a drum at their head, and a fiddle

bringing up the rear, and arranged themselves in a circle at the foot of the hall steps, where the poor viscount, who had so fully reckoned upon peace, was compelled to appear to receive their compliments. So highly did they vaunt the virtues, the high breeding, and, above all, the generosity of the descendant of their ancient lords, that that honored individual could do no less than open wide the strings of the purse whose inexhaustible riches the village schoolmaster, the official author of the dithyrambic, had, among other topics, so loudly sung. Then the drum beat, the violin gave forth its repertory of village polkas, and the peasants shouted, "Vive Monsieur le Comte!"

At these shouts and the appeal of the fiddler the female portion of the hamlet could no longer contain themselves. Like one single shepherdess they rushed to the lawn, where the young girls pounced on the parterre and improvised gigantic bouquets, with which they covered the jacket of M. le Comte, who, according to ancient usage, placed his right hand upon his heart, and his left in his pocket, and cried, "Merci, mes enfans!" Thereupon a shower of five-franc pieces responded to the vivats, and the new lord of the manor could not in politeness decline to open the ball with the first damsel who came to his hand.

When once we launch out it is difficult to stop. Upon a sign from the viscount, a hogshhead of wine was

broached. Then the vivats rose to a pitch of frenzy—the men sang all manner of Marseillaises, the women outscramed a first trombone of hussars, the babies cried, and the mastiffs in the court yard added their contralto to this thundering concert.

The evening came; it was time to separate. The viscount hastened to bed and endeavored to sleep; but a frightful nightmare oppressed him. He dreamed that they drank all the wine in the cellar, that they devastated his thickets of roses, that his chest was emptied of five hundred francs, and that he caught a rheumatic ague. Upon awaking he felt very ill, and, counting the cost of the day before, he found that the dream was a reality. Thanks to friction, repose, and perhaps the absence of the doctor, he was well and afoot again in eight days.

“After all,” said he to himself, “it was a necessary tribute to custom; and these good people really appear to love me heartily. Now that I have satisfied the usages of the place, I shall certainly enjoy the silence and solitude I long for; for here, at thirty leagues from Tortoni’s, I am, or ought to be, far from the hum of men.”

Just as he finished this consoling monologue, up came the *garde champêtre* in his otter-skin cap and respectfully signified to the viscount a little *procès verbal*—the consequence of the musket shots that had been fired in

his honor a week before, and which had been strictly prohibited by a municipal regulation. So complete had been the tumult that my friend could not doubt the word of the officer; and as the mayor was a republican, who would enjoy making an example of monsieur the aristocrat, the viscount judged it best to submit to the fine imposed. He paid it at once, and hoped at length to enjoy the peace he sighed for.

He had already put on his blue and white striped jacket, and armed himself with his garden knife, for the purpose of pruning his first rose tree, when the servant announced Gros-Pierre and his spouse Mathurine. They came to ask M. le Vicomte to be the godfather of their seventh son; and as this is an honor a good Roman Catholic can never refuse, my neighbor, perforce, consented. He assisted at the baptism of the young thresher, of course accompanying his services by a feast to the friends on both sides and a few hundred sou pieces to Françoise the godmother.

In eight days more the viscount was at his eighth godfatherhood; and as the citizens of my arrondissement seldom stop short of their fifteenth paternization, it soon came to pass that my neighbor spent nearly all his mornings at the font.

He now went another step. Invited to all the marriages and funerals, he quitted the font but for the altar,

and had no sooner given away the bride than he had to bear the pall.

My neighbor, however, was yet but in the honeymoon of village usefulness. He beheld himself loved, honored, sought after—a little too much—by the good peasants who surrounded him. Eighteen hundred and fifty-two approached, and who could tell what might happen? It was as well to cook a little ragout of popularity beforehand. The viscount denied neither his door nor his services to his new friends.

As he came from the capital, and as every Parisian is supposed to be gifted with a universal genius, there was no process to plead against, no lease to renew, no clover crop to secure, but my friend was consulted. Did a difference arise, the disputants straightway rushed to the presence of M. le Vicomte. They explained the matter in hand; he gave his advice; and the interview usually ended by the belligerent parties, as in duty bound, falling to fisticuffs in the very audience chamber of their arbitrator. He was at once the village justice, advocate, and notary.

But he did not rest here. He became its physician. "*Médecin malgré lui*," be it understood. They forced him to say what he thought of such a one's cut finger, of such another's asthma; they awoke him in the middle of the night, that he might apply plasters and



administer *eau sucrée*. He was consulted by the entire community, insomuch that he at length attempted leeches, and even ventured to lay a sacrilegious hand upon the lancet. But here the faculty awaited him. The officer of health of the neighboring village, who owed him a grudge for having recovered without a prescription, surprised him in the very act of phlebotomy. The man made his report in the proper quarter, and the correctional police taught my noble neighbor that philanthropy becomes amenable to the penal law from the moment that it launches out into the piercing of veins and the application of leeches.

The viscount, who was far from wishing to resign his post of general benefactor, now thought he would confine himself to an employment out of reach of legal interference. Recognized from the first as the only decent writer in the community, he became public scribe to the hamlet. From morning till evening his little cabinet was crowded with all who had a cousin at a distance, a sister in service, or a lover with his regiment. My neighbor thus composed more than three folio volumes of epistles in every variety of style. The penknife superseded the pruning knife; the watering pots gave way to the inkstand.

Two days ago the crisis arrived. The young and fresh Françoise, who had played godmother to my

friend's part of godfather at his first baptism, was seated near his desk, explaining how she wished to break with François Dumanet, a corporal on furlough, who was desperately jealous of all the shepherds of the hamlet. She had come to ask the viscount to arrange the matter, seeing that Jacquat, the farmer's head man, had asked her in marriage; and Jacquat was a likely lad, who could easily earn his thirty crowns in the year, without counting the oats he pilfered from the stable and the eggs he picked up in the poultry yard.

The good viscount was bestowing upon his pretty client the most fatherly counsels when the door suddenly opened, and Corporal Dumanet, with cuffs turned up and mustaches bristling with rage, entered hastily. He first applied his cane lustily to the shoulders of his beloved, and then, falling upon the innocent viscount, proved how very possible it is for our best intentions to be mistaken by a jealous lover. This was too much for my friend. He seized the first weapon that came to hand, and retaliated the caning by a thrust with the pruning knife.

Poor fellow! It was the first time he had had an opportunity of using it; and so excellently did he profit by this one, and so neatly did he operate upon his adversary's face, that it never lost from that day the marks of his skill. But arboriculture, applied to the human

species, is forbidden by the law as well as the unprofessional exercise of leeches and lancet. The viscount spent forty-eight hours in a tedious negotiation with Dumanet, which was only yesterday evening brought to a conclusion: He bought a substitute for the corporal, who remained in the village and espoused Françoise. The business cost from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred francs; but then my neighbor received a pressing invitation to the nuptials.

This morning I was coursing near my house, when I saw a vehicle whirling along the high road towards Paris. Within it was the viscount, who looked out of the window, and, observing me, ordered the driver to stop. "My friend," cried he as I came within hearing, "au revoir this winter at Paris! I precede you to the modern Babylon. I return to my pleasant *entresol*, which happily has not yet met with a new tenant. I go to seek calm, leisure, peace in the Boulevard des Italiens. I take with me a rose tree, that I shall prune on my window sill, and two strawberry plants, to water in my dressing room. I leave hamlets, shepherds, and the shady grove, to live and die far from the hum of men."

## **GRACE BROWN.**

### **A SKETCH FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS.**

**BY MRS. D. CLARKE.**

**GRACE BROWN** was the pet of the village—pretty, lively, and, like all other pets, very self-willed; but the effects of this latter quality were softened down and rendered quite loveable by her open, generous disposition, which would not allow her to injure another, even to gratify that ruling passion. Some said that Grace thought herself sufficiently handsome, and termed it vanity. True, perhaps, when each Sabbath morning found her ready decked for the sunny walk to the parish church on the hill-side, or the week day's evening saw her in her little chamber window plying her needle—yes, perhaps then, as she caught a side-long glance at herself in the little mirror, she might think it no such great wonder that the young men gazed as they passed her, or that they looked so curiously at the bow-pots and flowering geraniums perched on the sill of her casement—perhaps, too, she might think they cast a glance beyond. But was this vanity? No; Grace was as free of that hateful quality as

the bird which carolled so joyously in his bright cage on the cottage wall. Vanity cannot be justly attributed to those who are only conscious of possessing the qualities which are theirs in reality, but to those alone who boast to themselves of perfections which they can never hope to possess. Such was the case with those who termed Grace vain.

One fine autumn evening she sat, as usual, beside her geraniums, over which was hung her little bird Pet; but the leaves of the former hung droopingly, as though to ask of their sweet mistress the usual drop of spring water, and poor Pet chirruped and hopped from perch to perch, and ruffled his yellow feathers to attract her attention, but in vain. No cooling drop greeted the sickly leaf—no tiny fingers placed a bit of sugar between Pet's cage wires. And how was this? Was Grace ill? No; but her thoughts were wandering, and although her eyes were fixed full on poor Pet and his companion plants, she neither saw one nor the other. And whither were her thoughts wandering? Only into a neighboring lane, up which she strolled when the sun was beginning to dip his bright head beneath the blue tops of the neighboring hill. It was a very pleasant lane, but as its sides were bounded by high hawthorn and wild rose-bushes, it may be supposed Grace did not go there for the sake of any

beautiful prospect, for her whole height was not more than the top of the banks on which the bushes grew. For what, then, could it be? In truth it was that there generally accompanied her thither a very pleasant companion—not her mother—not one of the neighbors' daughters. No: but a young man, the son of a farmer not far distant.

Yes, the truth may as well be told. Grace had given, or thought she had given, her little heart to this companion of her strolls; and, indeed, any one, to look on him, might imagine a better choice could not be made. Tall, handsome, and athletic he was, and his eye beamed when he looked on her. But they who knew him better than Grace, said that he was wild and fickle. Neither did they scruple to warn her of that knowledge. But Grace would not believe. How could she, when she saw that, although they spoke against him, they were always ready to welcome him to their own homes? Besides, there was an eloquence far more powerful to the heart and understanding of Grace—more eloquent, more easily believed than aught they could utter. Yes, the eye and tongue of William Clively were the monitors most eagerly sought, and most willingly listened to when found. How could she think he was deceiving her? There was no falsehood in his deep gaze on her—no

harshness in his soft voice. But there was one who did not like him, to whom Grace had ever yet been accustomed to pay the most profound submission, because that humility had never been forced, but ever won from her by love. That being was her mother!

She had now been sitting in this deep reverie some ten minutes, from which she was roused by a light hand being laid on her shoulder. The blood mounted to her temples and cheek, for she knew, without raising her eyes, that it was her mother, and she felt conscious that that mother's eye was reading her innermost heart. She also knew that she had nought to fear, for though at this moment her little heart had been rebelling, her parent's chiding was ever one of gentleness.

"Grace, love," spoke the mother, gently placing her hand on the half downcast head, "why do you not go forth this evening? See, the sun has almost lost his last bit of crimson in the deep grey. Come, love; you have been sewing all day. Just throw your scarf around you and walk in our garden."

"I would rather not, mamma," answered Grace in a low tone, turning her head still more from her parent, and then, for the first time, casting her eyes on the drooping plants and now sulky little Pet. But she quickly added, "I will

water my trees and chirrup to Pet a little, for he seems quite to have the mopes."

"And how comes it that he has the mopes, love?" again spoke her mamma.

"Ah! I see, mamma," returned the now half-tearful, half-smiling maiden; "I see you have been reading my heart, and that it is useless to keep anything from you. But though you have seen part that was passing there, you cannot tell all!"

"But I can guess, Grace; and that, perchance, will do as well. I doubt not you thought me very cruel—very inconsiderate in not allowing you to have quite your own way; and I doubt not that you thought I knew very little about it; but sit down, love, and I will tell you a little passage in my own life, and after that I shall leave you to judge for yourself, only first assuring you that I have every proof that William Clively is very wild, and his father quite unable to support him in his present extravagance. See here, love, I have brought my knitting; so take up your work from the window sill, and thus, while we are quite industrious, I will proceed to tell you that my sketch commences when I was about a twelvemonth older than you are now. At that time, Grace, I was circumstanced, too, somewhat as you are. You understand me love?" Graco blushed and smiled. "I had a rebellious heart,



too ; and there was one for whom it was rebellious—one whom it had set up as the idol of its idolatry, and one whom, unfortunately, neither of my parents approved. But yet, Grace, I own that I thought my knowledge of his habits far exceeded theirs ; and all I knew of him was fair and open. Things continued thus for above eighteen months, at the end of which time my eyes were fearfully opened to his vices—he committed a forgery and absconded ; though it is probable, had he staid, no injury would have awaited him, for his friends, who were wealthy and powerful, made up the sum for which he had risked so much, and paid it. Grace, it was some time, even then, before I could perfectly win my heart from its idolatry ; but it had seen its error, and my mind was made up to overcome such perversity, and I did. Yes, Grace ; I knew what it was to feel cherished affections warring against my own convictions of right. You will perhaps say that he had deserted me, and it might be that pride rose superior to neglect and slight ; but not so. He did not desert me—he did not slight me ; for though all others were ignorant of his destination, I knew whither he had fled, and from thence received a letter full of affection and repentance for past follies. But, Grace, had I forgiven, or rather overlooked his vice, (for I did forgive,) I never could have placed confidence in

him again; so I wrote him once, but that once was to discard him forever. From that time I busied myself in work, in tending my garden, in assisting my neighbors, and, indeed, in various ways of which I had not thought before. I saw that people approved my conduct, too; every eye greeted me, every tongue welcomed me in joyous tones; and in time my own heart grew joyous, and felt a lightness it had never known till then, even in its wildest moments of affection for the now unworthy. But I did not know the fullness of the happiness I was to reap from that one era of my life till five years had elapsed. During that period, love, your dear father had wooed me, and knowing from all that he was beloved and respected, he won me, although not a fiftieth part so handsome or engaging in his manner as he of whom I have been speaking. But he soon taught me to love him—I do not mean with the girlish wildness I had loved before—but with an affection which might last through sorrow, sickness, death! as it has done, dear Grace!”

The tears started to the sweet eyes of Grace, and fell thickly upon the little border on which she was so busily plying her needle, as the thought of her fond father passed across her heart, and smote it for its rebellion against her will to whose care he had so solemnly entrusted

her on his death-bed. The mother was also silent for a few moments.

"Well, love," she at length resumed, "you were but a few months old when, one day, I was sitting with you in a small arbor in the garden of the dwelling where we then resided. On a sudden I heard the latch of the garden gate raised, and a poor emaciated looking man toiled up the sunny walk. He appeared in the last stage of wretchedness, and sickness seemed to add its heavy load of misery where there already appeared to be an accumulation of ills. I rose with an intention of inquiring into his condition, and relieving him as far as my means would permit; and, taking you in my arms, I stood before him. But, Grace, I suppose that time had not so changed me as it had done him, for he instantly ejaculated my maiden name! Yes, love, you may well drop your work and raise your eyes. It was indeed he whom I had loved, and persisted in loving, in opposition to my parents' judgment. At that moment your father appeared at the door, and when I looked on you and him, contrasted with the wretched mass of filth that shrunk before me, my heart leaped with gratitude to God for teaching me to subdue my own evil passions. Your father had known, before our marriage, all the circumstances concerning him and myself, so that a few words made

known to him the cause of the surprise pictured in both our countenances ; and to make me love and reverence him still more, that good man relieved his present wants and provided for his future ones. Yes, Grace, your father fed, clothed, and lodged that repentant creature in a neighboring cottage till he recovered health and strength — nay, more, he concealed his name from all inquiring ears, and not an eye which had once known could now recognize George May ! ”

“ George May, mother ? ”

“ Yes, love ; George May ! The same who used to pay us the yearly visit from London, to evince his gratitude for your father's kindness. The same who died in our village of decline seven years after, leaving you the Bible and Prayer-book as the only legacy which could be bestowed by poor, but repentant George May ! But now, dear, it is growing quite dark, I will go and see our evening meal prepared, and when we have taken that, pray to your Maker, and then retire to your pillow.” And so Grace did ; and the next morning, when she entered the breakfast-room, she threw her arms around her mother's neck, and whispered that she had gained the victory ; *she*, too, would try if her mind might not overcome the erring inclinations of her heart.

Yes, and Grace succeeded ; and twenty years after, when she saw a daughter of her own grow-

ing up, she remembered how mildly her own mother had won her from her folly ; and she felt that, to be obeyed by that daughter, she must remember that herself had once been a wild and wilful being, and that it is only by placing our own hearts in the situation of others, that we can hope to influence them by our precepts.

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## **JULIET'S TOMB IN VERONA.**

**BY W. H. HARRISON.**

"**BUT I assure you, sir," said the cicerone, "that there is nothing to see in it."**

**"More than in all Verona."**

**The cicerone shrugged his shoulders, and we continued our way.**

**There is no town in Italy more interesting in its appearance than Verona. A quiet and venerable melancholy broods over its streets and houses. Its architecture of all forms; its peculiar case-ments and balconies; the half Gothic, half classic, stamp of its antiquity, have, to my eyes, an inexpressible charm. I think to recognize something Shakespearian in the aspect of the place; it accords well with the memories with which Shakespeare has associated its reverent name; and I own that I trod its motley streets with less respect for its history than for its immortal legend:—for was it not here that the gay Mercutio and the haughty Tybalt ran their brief career?—along these very streets went the masked troop, with their torch-bearers and merry music, on the night that Romeo made himself a guest in the**

halls of Capulet and won the heart of the impassioned Juliet! The Gothic lattice, the frequent balcony, the garden seen through the iron gates that close yonder ancient court, do they not all breathe of Romeo—of Shakespeare—of Romance?—of that romance which is steeped in the colors of so passionate, so intoxicating a love, that in order even to comprehend it, we must lift ourselves out of our common and worldly nature—we must rise from what our youth has been made by the arid cares and calculating schemes of life—we must shut ourselves up, as it were, in a chamber of sweet dreams, from which all realities must be rigidly excluded—we must call back to the heart, to the sense, to the whole frame, its first youth—we must feel the blood pass through the veins as an elixir, and imagine that we are yet in that first era of the world, when (according to the Grecian superstition) LOVE was the only deity that existed, and his breath was the religion of creation. Then, and then only, can we acknowledge that the legend of Romeo and Juliet does not pass the limits of nature. For the great characteristic of their love is youth—the sparkling and divine freshness of first years:—its luxuriant imagination—its suddenness and yet its depth—the conceits and phantasies which find common language too tame, and wander into sweet extravagance from the very truth of the pas-

sion,—all this belongs but to the flush and May of life, the beauty of our years—the sunny surface of the golden well. You see at once the *youngness* of that love, if you compare it with the love of Antony and Cleopatra in another and no less wonderful tragedy of the great master. The love, in either, passes the level of human emotions—it is the love of warmer hearts and stronger natures than the world knows. But the one is the love that demands luxury and pomp; it dispenses with glory, but not with magnificence; it lies

“In a pavilion, cloth of gold, of tissue,  
O’er picturing that Venus where we see  
The fancy outwork nature.”

Take away the majesty from that love, and it sinks into the gross passion of a hoary dotard and an old coquette. But everything about the love of Juliet is young, pure even in its passion; it does not lose worlds, but it can dispense with the world itself; it asks no purple canopies, no regal feasts; its wine is rich enough without dissolving pearls in its sparkling freshness;—it is precisely that which belongs to the beautiful inexperience of the passionate girl;—it is the incarnation of passion, solely because it is the incarnation of youth. And *there*, in that barn belonging to the convent of the Franciscans, the very convent of the good old friar of the tale—no roof above—the damp



mould below—the broken, oblong sepulchre itself half filled with green water, is the tomb of this being, made as familiar to us by genius, as if she had really moved and lived before us—as if we had gazed upon her in the revel, and listened to her voice from the moonlit balcony. Nothing can equal the sadness and gloom of the spot. On the walls yet remain two old and faded frescos on the religious subjects favored by Italian art: morning and night the dews fall through the roofless hovel, and the melancholy stars gleam on the tomb whence the very dust is gone! It has not even the grandeur of desolation—no splendid sepulchre—no cathedral aisle—no high-arched roof impresses you with awe. A heap of fagots, piled carelessly at one end of the outhouse, proves the little veneration in which the place is held; the spot is desecrated; the old tomb, with its pillow of stone, is but a broken cistern to the eyes of the brethren of the convent! The character of the place is drear, unsanctifying, slovenly, discomfort! Beautiful daughter of the Capulet! none care for thee, thy love, or thy memories, save the strangers from the Far Isle; whom a northern minstrel hath taught to weep for thee! It is this peculiar dreariness, this want of harmony between the spot and the associations, which makes the scene so impressive. The eager, tender, ardent Juliet—every thought a pas-

sion—the very Hebe of Romance, never fated to be old;—and this damp, unregarded hovel, strewn with vile lumber, and profaned to all uses! What a contrast!—what a moral of human affections! Had it been a green spot in some quiet valley, with the holiness of Nature to watch over it, the tomb would have impressed us with sweet, not sorrowful, associations. We should have felt the soft steps of the appropriate spirit of the place, and dreamed back the dreams of poetry, as at Arqua, or in the grotto of Egeria. But there is no poetry here! all is stern and real; the loveliest vision of Shakespeare, surrounded by the hardest scenes of Crabbe. And afar in the city rise the gorgeous tombs of the Scaligers, the family of that Duke of Verona, who is but a pageant, a thing of foil and glitter, in the machinery of that enchanting tale! Ten thousand florins of gold had one of these haughty princes consumed, in order to eclipse, in his own, the magnificence of the tombs of his predecessors. Fretted and arched in all the elaborate tracery of the fourteenth century, those feudal tombs make yet the pride and boast of Verona;—and to Juliet, worth, to the place, all the dukes that ever strutted their hour upon the stage, this gray stone, and this mouldering barn! It is as if to avenge the slight upon her beautiful memory, that we yawn as we gaze upon the tombs of

power, and feel so deep a sympathy with this poor monument of love!

The old woman that showed the place had something in her of the picturesque;—aged, and wrinkled, and hideous;—with her hard hand impatiently stretched out for the petty coin which was to pay for admission to the spot;—she suited well with all the rest! She increased the pathos that belongs to the deserted sanctuary. How little could she feel that nothing in Verona was so precious to the “Zingaro” as this miserable hovel!—“And if it should not be Juliet’s tomb after all!” Out, sceptic! The tradition goes far back. The dull Veronese themselves do not question it! Why should we? We all bear about us the prototype of that scene. That which made the passion and the glory of our youth, the Juliet of the heart, when once it has died and left us, lies not its tomb within us, forgotten and unregarded,—surrounded by the lumber of base cares, polluted by strange and indifferent passers by, (the wishes and desires of more vulgar life,) unheeded, unremembered,—the sole monument which sanctifies the rude and commonplace abode in which it moulders silently away?

**MILICENT.****BY MRS. CHARLES GORE.**

"A LOVELY creature," said I, placing my hand athwart my forehead by way of sight shade, with as much the air of a connoisseur as I could manage to assume.

"A dear one,—a prudent, and a virtuous," rejoined the knight, turning sharply away, and betaking himself to his box, as if he had made an effort to look upon an object connected with painful recollections. Nay, if I am not mistaken, there was moisture on the lace of his sleeve as he raised his arm to his eyes, affecting to ward off the sunbeams glaring through the windows. For worlds I would not have entrapped him into the discussion of the subject; but reading curiosity in my looks, he paused when we reached the door of the gallery, and, tapping me significantly on the hand, said, in a low voice, "I have her history written out in fair text-hand among my family papers. My cousin Ursula was the choicest scribe in this part of the country. You will find specimens of her best Italian manner in the great family recipe book; but if you are inquisitive touching the memoir of her sister



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Milicent, why 't is heartily at your service." The word "prudent" was a stumbling-block. I was ever inclined to banish from among the cardinal virtues, the prim, self-contented, prudish-looking damsel with the looking-glass; and since even St. Augustine pleads guilty to a similar prejudice, I, a sinner, need not hesitate to avow the antipathy. Nevertheless, the following sketch of family history could not but interest my feelings; and I have no scruple in pointing out the picture of "the Lady Keswycke at her looking-glass," as the sweetest personification of Prudence that has exemplified the duty of self-examination since the days of Penelope.

Sir Lawrence de Cressingham, of Cressingham Hall, was the friend and companion of the great Clarendon;—sat in the Long Parliament, retired to France on the ruin of the royal cause, and died in exile. In compensation for these disasters, his son, Sir Giles, received, at the Restoration, offers of a pension and peerage; both of which he stoutly declined, as being connecting links with a court towards which he was anything but favorably disposed. Retiring, therefore, to the estate or remnant of estate still pertaining to the family name, he devoted his time to its cultivation, and his thoughts to the rearing of two daughters, bequeathed him by his wife, Ursula de Coverly, grand-aunt to the good knight, whom it was the

ambition of his frugality to raise to the condition of co-heiresses.

Unfortunately, however, little Milicent and Ursula were not the sole objects of his solicitude. The charge of a young cousin, son to a younger brother of Sir Lawrence, who had fallen on the field of Worcester, leaving a young wife and posthumous child to the mercy of his then wealthy relatives, was entailed upon him with the family estates; and Francis de Cressingham grew up as the sole child of the house, till, thirteen years after his melancholy birth, little Milicent made her appearance to initiate the heart of the bluff Sir Giles into the still warmer tenderness of actual paternity.

Frank, a spirited lad, with the wild blood of his race already boiling in his veins, was not jealous of the little stranger;—nay, he would often snatch the pretty doll into his arms and cover it with kisses, till the lady mother shrieked aloud lest its delicate frame should be injured by his rough caresses. But however blustering elsewhere, Francis became a tamed lion on approaching the nursery; and when, a few years afterwards, the Lady de Cressingham died of a slow decay, there was no one in the house whose endearments afforded consolation to her two moping, motherless girls, saving those of “cousin Frank.” His visits to the Hall from college or

his regiment were hailed as signals for a general holiday. Sir Giles prepared for a carouse with the neighboring squires; Milicent, who at that period inclined to the coquette, began to gather the bright rings of her chestnut hair under a *fontange* of the newest fashion; while Ursula, her younger sister, would sit for hours at her spinet, studying sonatas for his amusement. The worthy knight was scarcely prouder of his young relative than were the two girls; and during the perils encountered by the combined fleet in which young De Cressingham was serving with honor as a volunteer, Dr. Esdras, the family chaplain, could by no means determine which of the three displayed most fervor at morning and evening prayers in commending to Heaven the destinies of those who "travel by land or by water."

Meanwhile, the peace of Nimeguen restored tranquillity to western Europe, and Captain de Cressingham to the Hall; and it was well for him that he escaped being drowned in sherriesack by his kinsman, or smothered in kisses by the two girls, during the first twenty-four hours of his sojourn. Milicent was scarcely fourteen; yet Dr. Esdras was of opinion that the raptures of her welcome might have been moderated with advantage to all parties. He even ventured to express some such notion in the hearing of his patron and disciple, Sir Giles; who swore in



good round terms that he had no mind to be chaplain-ridden, and would foster no crop-eared puritan in his household, till the doctor was fain to retreat into the little study that served him for dormitory and all, leaving the young people to be as loving and frolicsome as they and the obstinate knight thought proper.

But however warm the welcome of the elder Cressingham, and however strenuous his opposition to the innovations of a meddling chaplain, there existed between himself and his kinsman a fertile and inextinguishable germ of discord. They had lived on easy term in the relative position of benefactor and *protégé*, guardian and ward ; but as man and man, the case was widely different. Frank was a blind and hot-headed royalist ; while the loyalty of Sir Giles was somewhat refrigerated by the sacrifices he had been compelled to make to the improvidence and obstinacy of the House of Stuart. Frank was a courtier ; — Sir Giles a clown. But above all, the knight had formed, or, as *he* said, *obtained*, an opinion that, by means of certain fines and recoveries, the residue of the Cressingham estates were fully redeemed from the original deed of entail ; — while Frank regarded the whole as his inalienable inheritance ; and, dearly as he loved his two fair cousins, had no mind to be swaggered out of his birthright. A sovereign regnant is apt to

look with a jealous eye upon his heir apparent, and still more upon the heir presumptive, or presumptuous, who advances unrecognized claims. The young captain had not been six weeks established at the Hall, before theological differences ran high between himself and the pragmat-ical Esdras ; and the party designations of Whig and Tory, then in the first blush of their virulence, were soon fiercely bandied between the two cousins. The attempt to restore episcopacy in Scotland afforded an overflowing theme for those political squabbles, miscalled arguments ; and while the heart of the young volunteer waxed hot within him to hear himself stigmatized as a vapor-ing boy, the nose of Sir Giles waxed hot without him on being upbraided as a recreant from the faith of his gallant ancestors. It soon became apparent to Milicent and Ursula, that the sooner cousin Frank returned to Whitehall the more agreeable to cousin Giles. The young man was indebted to the testamentary dispositions of his uncle, Sir Lawrence, for a sufficient provision to supply the sword of a De Cressingham with new scabbards ; and he now burst forth once more upon his perilous career, and was soon heard of, fighting with the great Sobieski against Tekeli and the Turks.

At this period, Milicent de Cressingham, now rapidly advancing towards womanhood, was often

heard to interrupt her sister Ursula's labors in the wardrobe and still-room, with expressions of joy that their cousin should be absent from England during so stormy a season of political strife; more particularly as the zeal and domestic influence of Dr. Esdras increased in proportion as the public influence of his party declined; while the sinister aspect of their father's affairs only tended to irritate his prejudices against the ascendant faction. And yet, considering how often young Mistress de Cressingham declared herself "rejoiced" by the rambling campaigns of "poor Frank," it was surprising how much her coquetry subsided and her gayety declined during his absence. Instead of the *fontange*, with its ribands of cherry color, Milicent's tresses were now confined under as simple a riding-hood as the starchest puritan of them all; and having laid aside the rhapsodies of Dryden and Nat Lee and the mellifluous vagaries of Waller, she was oftentimes found seated in a favorite arbor of phyllyrea, looking out on the great canal, with a volume of the *Pilgrim's Progress* open upon her knee. Whither her thoughts were straying none could tell;—perhaps they were lost among the knots of a new stomacher;—perhaps at the siege of Vienna;—perhaps in the Slough of Despond!

It is needless to relate how slowly the monotonous years passed away at Cressingham Hall;

or how many hogsheads of wormwood wine, or gallons of rosemary water attested the housewifely diligence of its younger mistress, when, to the amazement of their good father, and the surprise of his moderately good chaplain, the elder, the fair Milicent, was moved to decline the suit of the Lord Keswycke, a worthy gentleman from the North, with the wisdom of fifty years on his brow, and the virtue of half as many annual thousand pounds in his pocket ; and who appeared on the field, moreover, in a coach and six surpassing the splendor of the Duchess of Portsmouth's. The siege of Vienna and of the lady were raised together ; and in the course of the same summer, after a submissive epistle claiming pardon of Sir Giles for past offences, on the score of youthful intemperance, cousin Frank returned from the Danube, his handsome face garnished with a pair of mustachios that streamed on the troubled air like the sacred horse-tail of the prophet which he had recently assisted to capture.

The conquering hero came—and all dissensions were speedily forgotten in the enthusiasm of a stretch of heroism, such as had not graced the annals of the House of Cressingham since the Crusades. The knight felt conscious that he could do no less than take by the hand a kinsman who had ventured to take the Turk by the beard,—closed weapon to weapon with a wild

Pandour,—and trampled under foot the consecrated standard of Mahommed. Again, and more warmly than ever, he was welcomed at the Hall; and amid the florescent marvellousness of his recitals, Milicent's eyes were seen to recover their sparkling lustre, and her riding-hood to assume something of a more courtly shaping. The clipped arbor was now deserted, or made to shelter a pair of turtle doves in lieu of the solitary sparrow. But lo! before cousin Frank's complexion had lost a shade of its Hungarian swarthinness under the less fervid skies of Britain, he and the old knight unluckily hit upon a matter of contestation far more stimulant to the wrath of both parties than either the test act, the orthodoxy of Dr. Sancroft, or the authenticity of the Rye-house plot. Francis de Cressingham ventured to demand the hand of his cousin Milicent in marriage;—and Sir Giles scrupled not to inform him that he was a blockhead for his pains.

It was on a hot, sultry, cross-grained afternoon in August; the chaplain and the ladies had accepted the hint of the knight's loyal toast to retire to their devotions; and the host and the young colonel were left *tête-à-tête*. On the table between them were flagons and flasks, and tall, spider-legged rummers; with a dish of mellow jargonelles, over which buzzed a swarm of summer flies and a malignant wasp or so, at which

Sir Giles sat fencing with his hunting *couteau*, till his nose grew as red as a love-apple, and his temper correspondently inflamed. After uttering divers pishes and pshaws, and other interjections to which Dr. Esdras and the recording angel might have found much to object, he looked down on his Spanish leather boots, and laid the blame on the twinges of a flying gout; and it was at this inauspicious moment, that Frank, (who, having defied Kara Mustapha and all his hosts, made light of the peevish mood of a country cousin,) with most audacious self-conceit, proceeded to tender his proposals for the hand of his cousin!—the old man winced grievously; but he no longer ascribed his grimaces to any physical ailment.

“Look ye here, Colonel Francis de Cressingham,” cried he, striving to subdue his rising choler, but pushing forward the flagons of Rhenish till they chimed together like an alarum, “I esteem you well as a kinsman, as my father’s ward, as the orphan of a gallant man, and so forth; but if you fancy that a girl of mine shall ever camp in the tents of Belial;—if you suppose that Milly de Cressingham has been reared to tramp at the heels of your troop, starch your ruffles six days o’ the week, and clear accounts with her conscience by half an hour’s whisper in the ear of some confounded Jesuit of a confessor on Satur-

day night,—i'faith you are mistaken, colonel!—plaguily mistaken,—and no thanks to you for the blunder. The wench will carry with her to some honest man's bosom half of my lands here pinned to her sleeve, without needing to graft herself and them on the withered branch of her family stock."

Frank de Cressingham's reply was given in a tone worthy of the fiercest pacha whose scimitar he had seen waving on the walls of Buda! He swore that, however beneath the notice of a needy knight-baronet, he might obtain richer and nobler wives than Mistress Milicent of the Hall, any day of the year; boasted his favor both with the king and the duke; denounced his kinsman as obnoxious to the court; nay, even threatened him with the growing ascendancy of popish influence. The old man's rejoinders grew louder and hotter, as he recognized the truth of Frank's allusions to his falling fortunes; and it was well, perhaps, that the dormitory or library of the good doctor was sufficiently near at hand, and his slumbers or studies sufficiently light, to admit of his being roused by the fray. Dr. Esdras rushed into the eating hall to separate the disputants, just as the hard argument of a heavy parcel-gilt goblet (an heir loom from their common grandsire) was flung at the head of the hero of the Danube!

It needed not long for Colonel Frank to cause

his horse to be saddled for instant departure : yet, brief as the period was between his offence and flight, he found leisure for a moment's interview with the lovely origin of both. They met, as usual, in the evergreen arbor ; where Frank, with the foam still moist on his lip, and the sparkle of rage still bright in his eye, mingled his blessings on herself with curses on her father ; implored,—besought,—nay, almost compelled her to fly with him ; retraced their long years of tenderness ; pictured their still longer years of future separation ; till Milicent grew cold and pale as a marble statue in his arms, and the tears rolled down her unconscious cheeks as she listened. But Frank de Cressingham, though brave as a soldier and glowing as a lover, was not endowed with a right generous spirit of humanity ; and in the improvidence of his selfishness, he now ventured to put forth an argument fatal to his cause : —he told her that the ruin of her father's house was accomplished ; and entreated her to fly with him from its desolation. He did not perceive with what thrice holy sanctity he was investing the duty of a daughter !

Assuming a dignity such as had never before elevated her graceful person, Milicent instantly extricated herself from his embraces, and bade him adieu forever. A few minutes afterwards, the colonel and his horse were enveloped with



clouds of dust on their road back to Whitehall ; and Milly was weeping at the old man's feet. Her father had been insulted ; and in the perpetrator of such an offence she no longer recognized a lover. She implored the forgiveness of her parent,—the forgiveness of Heaven,—for that one short moment of rebellion ; and poor Ursula de Cressingham had a hard task in soothing the ire of the old knight and the tears of her sister.

But the love that has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength is not to be cast away in an hour, however grievous the backslidings of its object. The indignant daughter wavered not for a moment in her determination, nor was there one tear of repentance among the floods with which she bathed the green boughs of the arbor after Cressingham's departure ; but she soon grew more than ever attached to the spot ;—coming thither in the first place to sigh over her lover's offences ;—in the next to bewail his departure with Lord Dartmouth's expedition to Tangier ;—and, lastly, to commune with her own prudence touching her father's entreaties that she would once more give ear to Lord Keswycke's tender overtures.

The position of poor old Sir Giles was now, indeed, every way deplorable. His health had long been breaking. Early hardships endured during the civil wars had prematurely bowed his

frame ;—the consciousness of apostasy, combined with the mortification of beholding the cause he had embraced on the death of his father gradually sink into nothingness, only augmented the mischief ;—while the position of public affairs, the death of Russell and Sydney, and the flagrant malpractices of Jeffries, filled him with consternation. Every day some harsh warning was breathed into the old man's ears ; every day the denunciations of his young cousin recurred to his memory ; and each retrogressive step taken by the protestant party seemed to augment the triumph of Francis and his own degradation. All these things were solemnly pointed out by old Esdras to the attention of Milicent and her sister. He assured them that their father's injudicious zeal had attracted the fatal notice of the lord chief justice ; that the name of Sir Giles de Cressingham was entered in Jeffries' black list ; and that nothing less than the protection of a son-in-law, rich and influential as the Lord Keswycke, would secure the old knight from impeachment and the Tower. The two girls, who were no strangers to their father's imprudence of speech and action, trembled while they listened ! And on the very evening of the chaplain's argumentation, Lord Keswycke arrived anew at the Hall !

But, having formerly put to the proof the fair Milicent's inaccessibility to the ordinary tempta-

tion of her sex, he this time left the coach and six at Keswycke Moat, and pursued his courtship in the simplest and most straightforward manner. Perhaps his lordship was conscious of having no extrinsic advantages to match with the heroic vein; for he was a tall, stern, hard-favored, ungainly man; wanting only a Geneva skull-cup and cloak to look the perfect puritan. His voice was tuneless—his manner harsh—his matter dry—his demeanor cold; and but that, on the week succeeding his arrival, the old knight, her father, was subpoenaed to appear before Jeffries as witness on one of those deadly trials manufactured to fill out the purposes of his commission, it is probable that Milicent might have been unable to control her repugnance sufficiently to give him her hand. But after due self-interrogation, and terror-struck by the approaching danger, she finally consented to become Lady Keswycke in time to justify her lord in calling together his retainers, and accompanying his venerable father-in-law to the tribunal in the west:—and when soon afterwards Sir Giles was dismissed with honor from the prosecution, it was rumored in the court and city that his preservation had cost a sum of five thousand pounds to Milicent's bridegroom. Whole years of tenderness and devotion would not have impressed the heart of his young wife so strongly as that one week of self-sacrifice

and generosity! How could she do otherwise than venerate the hand which had preserved the life of her father?

Lord Keswycke, meanwhile, expressed a decided objection to the Cressingham family prolonging their residence at the old Hall. The evil spirit of the new reign was already abroad. Fagots were heard crackling on every side as in the bloody days of Mary, while the martyrdom of Mrs. Gaunt and the Lady Lisle attested that they were not kindled in vain; nay, it was a favorite sport with James to entertain his foreign ambassadors with vaunting narratives of what he facetiously termed the "Campaign of Jeffries!" The revocation of the edict of Nantes had cut off even the hope of a refuge in France; and Millicent, while she contemplated the perils and dangers of her infirm parent, offered up fervent thanksgivings to Heaven for having afforded the means of securing him a stronghold against his enemies, a shelter for his old age. With her father and her sister as her inmates, her dreaded residence at Keswycke Moat lost all or half its terrors. But though many persons averred that the stern bridegroom was mainly anxious to remove her from a spot pointed out by Esdras as replete with associations inimical to the growth of wedded love, the world was, as usual, mistaken. However little calculated to shine at Whitehall,

or vie with the attractions of the cavalier cousin's sweeping plume and mustachios, Keswycke was a man of unswerving honor; nor would have raised to his bosom a wife whose virtue he deemed it necessary to fence round with such fierce guardianship. Milicent might have loitered out the remainder of her days in the phyllyrea bosquet, without exciting any alarm in her husband beyond that of her catching the ague from the malaria of the stagnant canal.

And well did the lovely bride repay this honest confidence in her prudence. In ceasing to be a child, Milicent had put away childish things. Her lover's egotism, her father's danger, her husband's excellence, had sobered her fancy and strengthened her character. Like "the gentle lady wedded to the Moor," she beheld her husband's image in his mind,—or rather had ceased to notice the uncomeliness of his aspect;—but, apprehending the holy value of the name of wife, and reverencing the mighty importance of its duties, she felt that she had a part to play in the sight of man and the sight of God; and that, having fallen upon a period of national trouble, it was incumbent on her to meet the tumult with redoubled firmness, even as the mountain shrubs root themselves the stronger for the tempest. Lord Keswycke, if he did not yet touch her heart, already commanded her respect. He was

neither gracious nor graceful ; but his every word was bright with meaning—his every action with nobleness. She looked up to his intellectual superiority as to the majesty of the firmament over her head, which, transparent as it is, no eye can search or measure ; and grew more important in her own eyes, on finding herself valued and approved by a being of such eminent endowments. She knew (for Keswycke was not the man to bestow his name on one he deemed unworthy his utmost confidence) that it was to *him* the protestant party looked for furtherance and protection against the innovations of a despotic king and corrupt ministry. She knew that he afforded the connecting link between the Court of the Hague and the people of Britain ; that it needed but the uplifting of his hand for Mary of Orange to appear on her native shores, and assume a throne forfeited by her father's blind and bigoted defiance of its laws and constitution. She knew that on the acquittal of the bishops at their trial at Westminster, it was Keswycke's name that was shouted loudest by the rejoicing populace ; that it was *his* influence which upheld the opposition of the University of Oxford to the imperious mandates of the king—that the chief men of the city—the chief prelates—the chief jurists—were in constant and confidential communication with Keswycke Moat. Yet in spite of all this, Millicent

feared nothing for his safety ; for she also knew the purity of his life, the steadiness of his judgment, and the total absence of worldly or interested motives from his proceedings. She saw that his measures were taken for conscience sake ; that he was above the influence of ambition, beyond the reach of venal calculations ;—the diligent servant of God, the vigilant master of his own passions ;—and believed him secure as the ark of the covenant from the touch of a lawless sovereign. It was not with her liege lord as with her rash and vacillating father. Keswycke could have said or done or thought no weak or evil thing ; and Milicent was as proud of the greatness of her husband's mind as many women would have been of the mightiness of his estate and condition. Once or twice it was insinuated to her by old Sir Giles, now verging on his dotage, that Francis de Cressingham (who was well known as an accredited emissary between the courts of James and the Vatican, or rather as the officious agent between Father Petre, the royal confessor, and his own uncle, Cardinal Howard) had pointed out the popular influence of Lord Keswycke as a matter of peril and terror to the weak minds of James and his queen ; and that a system of espionage was accordingly instituted in the environs of Keswycke Moat. Yet still Milicent feared nothing. Whenever Ursula

was moved to the acknowledgment of her apprehensions, her sister did but incite her to join more fervently in prayer for their mutual consolation, and more actively in study for the engrossment of their faculties, lest she should be induced into the frailty of weak-heartedness in her lord's behalf.

"There is a mighty duty in his hand," said she, as they walked side by side along the stately terraces of the old castle: "the fate of nations is committed to his charge,—the welfare of millions,—the destinies of interminable posterity. Shall I then,—even I,—by my weak terrors molest my husband in his most responsible career, or add one thorn to the anxieties of his arduous undertakings? No, no! Ursula:—if I am weak, pray that I may be strengthened; if perplexed, pray that my paths may be made straight;—but hazard not one word to me of my husband's danger, lest I grow faint in my good intent. Talk to me of other things. The earth, with its flowers, which is so bright around us;—the Heavens, with their stars, which are so bright above;—futurity, with its hopes, brighter, yea! a thousand-fold brighter, beyond! Let us talk of these things, Ursula; nor linger one sentence longer amid the political dissensions of a misgoverned nation."

So steadfast was Millicent in this prudent and virtuous resolve, that throughout the perils which



ensued, although her frame wasted to a shadow, and her voice grew even as a whisper for very wretchedness, she breathed not a word of fear or misgiving.

From the momentous period of the landing of William, she suffered no hour of the twenty-four—no moment of the hour—to remain unoccupied; for now, for the first time since her marriage, she was withdrawn from her husband's company. Lord Keswycke had hastened, by a preappointment with the Lord Churchill and the Duke of Grafton, to join the protestant prince at Axminster;—and even at the moment of bidding him farewell, Milicent had the noble fortitude to say "God speed him!" without embittering their parting embrace by a single tear. She looked upon him as a nuncio of Heaven, going forth to fulfil his master's work; nor was it till after his departure, after the old gates of the Moat had actually closed upon the last straggler of his train, that she fell down on the threshold in a deep swoon; struggling for five hours between death and life, while the doting old knight tore his gray hair by her bedside, and Ursula sat chafing her cold hands without hope of her recovery. Her disorder arose, however, from weakness of body, not weakness of mind. Her soul was worthy of her husband and his cause; and in the course of a day or two, she was enabled to rise and go

into her oratory, and pray with all her spirit for a blessing on the absent one. "He saved my father;—he is about to save my country:—strengthen him, O Lord God, with thy mighty power, and prosper his undertaking!" said Milicent; and, in the sight of Heaven at least, she had no need to check the bitterness of her agony.

Her prayers were heard!—The hour of danger passed away; but although Milicent knew him to be standing at the king's right hand at Westminster, she had prudence to refrain from joining her husband in the capital, or from interceding for a short visit at the Moat, lest she should intercept, however slightly, the fulfilment of his public duties. Mighty indeed had been the strife within her soul, and mighty the anguish of her heart, during the political conflict of that bloodless revolution. But still more mighty was her reward when, summoned by her lord to their new residence at court, she heard his name shouted by the grateful populace as he approached; and, amid the tears that sprung into her eyes, and which she was no longer compelled to repress, hailed for the first time the countenance she loved, brightened by the sunshine of perfect contentment! The destinies of his country were secured, and Milicent was again in his arms!

It was amid the tumult of this unhopd-for triumph, that Lady Keswycke and her lord were

summoned to receive the old man her father's dying benediction ; and it was an affecting thing to hear the aged knight, reversing the law of nature, render thanks to his child that she had solaced him, and supported him, and been a stay to his feeble footsteps. He bequeathed his daughter Ursula to the guardianship of his high-minded son-in-law as to that of a second providence ; and then, like Simeon, was ready to " depart in peace, now that his eyes had seen the salvation of the Lord : " leaving it to his daughters to carry back the remains of their old father to the abode of his ancestors, — where he had hoped to return and find a tranquil home, and where it was their pious duty to lay his gray head in the grave.

Some years had now elapsed since they quitted Cressingham. The hall had grown damp and dark and gloomy, even to the uttermost desolation ; while the gardens, like every spot recommitted to the hand of nature, were only the more beautiful in proportion to their abandonment. The trimmed shrubs had shot forth into a natural shape ; the flowers, unchecked and unpruned, had sprung up as in a wilderness of blossoms ; song-birds had built unheeded on every side ; and even the wild bees now deposited their treasures in the clefts of its solitary trees. As the sisters bent their steps on the evening of their arrival across the

weedy gravel, or ascended the mossy stone steps of the terrace—startled in their turn by the wood-pigeons they scared from their nests—Ursula vainly attempted to beguile her sister from the path leading to the phyllyrea bower. “Nay, let us not bend our steps thitherward,” faltered she, at length, fancying that the spot would present a painful recollection to the mind of Lady Keswycke.

“And wherefore not?” answered Milicent, in her own sweet, steadfast voice, turning upon her a countenance that their father’s recent death had stripped of its natural bloom. “It is my place of triumph, Ursula!—the spot where I was tempted—the spot where I was sustained against temptation. But for that green arbor and its scene of parting, I had followed my youth’s vain fancy, and never been blest as the wedded wife of the noblest of mankind; had never enjoyed the triumph of being dearest of all to one whose love extends to the meanest of his fellow-creatures:—the glory of holding a part in that mind to which the nations of the earth turn for guidance and instruction:—the holy joy of knowing myself a first object in those prayers betwixt which and Heaven no vile or worldly object interposeth! My sister—my dear sister—look around; look at these shapeless walls of verdure, these decaying benches, this weed-entangled ground under

our feet ; — and then thank Heaven for me that they were made to bear witness to my eternal separation from one who would have had me desert my father in his falling fortunes ! ”

The influence of a woman thus gifted was necessarily great at the sober court of the new queen ; where, sorely against her will, and solely in obedience to her husband, Lady Keswycke had undertaken the post of Lady of the Bedchamber. Resigning the tranquil seclusion of Keswycke Moat for the stir and pageantry of Hampton Court, and elbowed in the antechamber of the palace of St. James', instead of presiding over the restoration of the Cressingham estates, Milicent, over whom, from her youth upward, the word duty possessed a paramount authority, renounced without repining those simple habits which her country breeding rendered second nature. The buoyancy of her youthful gayety had long been subdued into the matron dignity of a wife ; but an innocent joyousness of spirit still sparkled in her eyes whenever Keswycke's weight in the council, or arguments in the House, or favor with all classes of the realm, were commended in her hearing. It was the custom of Mary to sit among the ladies of her court, engaged in needlework, or other exercises which could be made available to benevolent purposes ; and among these the Lady Keswycke was the fairest, and most grace-

ful, and most favored. Her prudence, her dignified humility, as well as her enthusiasm in the cause sanctioned by a father and a husband, rendered her an invaluable companion to her majesty ; and when, sixteen months afterwards, the king departed on his Irish expedition, it was in the bosom of her friend (her friend — not favorite) that the daughter of James — the wife of William — deposited her two-fold sorrow. And well indeed could Milicent appreciate their influence ; and earnestly did she rejoice that the necessity of Keswycke's presence in the council prevented him from following the fortunes of his royal master. He had been appointed by the king, with seven other statesmen, to exercise a direct influence over the measures of the queen ; and his position, as the husband of her favorite friend, having invested him in the royal mind with a degree of interest beyond that of the Lords Carmarthen and Nottingham, his time was soon wholly engrossed by hurried journeys between Windsor and Whitehall.

But the crisis of Milicent's destiny was now at hand. One morning, some days after the arrival of intelligence of the battle of the Boyne, Ursula de Cressingham burst, with frantic gestures and quivering lips, into the cabinet of his lady, her sister.

“ Weep with me,” cried she ; “ weep with me :

— our father's house is dishonored! Frank,— our cousin Frank—our playmate,—the hand-in-hand companion of our childhood—is a prisoner; ay, and likely to perish by an ignominious death!”

“The clemency of the king is well known,” said Milicent, coldly; “nor is it the custom of modern warfare to injure an honorable captive.”

“Alas, alas!” cried Ursula, “can I, dare I, tell you all, and move you to interfere in his behalf? Shall I avow the weakness of my heart? Yes! I *love* him, Milly;—love him with all the fervor of womanly attachment! While the eyes of our cousin Francis were riveted on *you*, mine saw nothing on this earth besides himself. Judge, therefore, Milicent, my dearest sister, judge of my feelings on learning that a great victory has blessed our protestant hosts; and that the papers of the Lord Tirconnell having fallen into the hands of the victors, a horrible plot has been discovered for the assassination of the king's majesty. Sister, it is rumored that a De Cressingham was the enemy to whom was delegated the perpetration of the crime!”

“Great Heaven!” exclaimed Milicent, “I thank thee that my father did not live to see this day.”

“He is innocent!—our cousin is innocent!” cried Ursula.

“Surely it is guilt enough to be accessible to

the charge of so heinous an enormity," said Lady Keswycke, shuddering with horror.

"And has your heart no memory?" ejaculated Ursula: "do you recollect nothing of your childish endearments,—your youthful friendships? The same blood flows in the breast of Francis that animated our father's; would you see it out-poured on a scaffold?—Would you hear the name of our forefathers profaned by the common voice as that of a traitor and a malefactor? Your influence is great with your lord. Plead with him, plead with him, and save our kinsman from this disgraceful end."

"Leave me," said the lady, bestowing a warm sisterly embrace upon the trembling Ursula; "I have need to ponder upon these things."

Millicent was seated at her tiring mirror when her sister burst into her chamber;—and there she still sat,—perplexed by that stir of pulse which, however great the influence of female prudence or Christian principle, is apt to wake anew on mention of the lover of our youth. The recollection of those early days was as a far-off vision; connected with her mother's endearments, her father's pride in her well-doing; with holy memories of the dead, with holy reliance on the living. It was strange, she thought, that her sister's partiality should have escaped her observation. Was it vanity that had blinded her eyes?



Had her persuasion of her cousin Frank's exclusive devotion to herself rendered her insensible to the possibility of his becoming an object of attachment to another? How came it, too, that Francis should have overlooked the lighter and brighter graces of her young sister, when connected with this flattering partiality? Millicent was still but five-and-twenty years of age; and in spite of all her prudence, an involuntary glance bent itself on her tiring glass for a reply to the question!

That Francis was really guilty of the offence laid to his charge did not for a moment occupy her fears. A De Cressingham turn assassin!—No, no, Frank might have subjected himself to suspicion—but to become a deliberate murderer! Impossible! She knew him to be deeply pledged to the fugitive king—the advocate and upholder of his most obnoxious measures; and he had probably been induced into some outrage, whereby still deadlier suspicions became attached to his designs.

What was to be done? The court was at Hampton; and Keswycke had but an hour before departed on state business for an audience with the queen. Should she despatch an express to him, imploring his intercession? Alas! how hard the task to commence a letter to the lofty Keswycke with an allusion to her girlish weak-

ness, with the narrative of a love tale ! But there was no time for deliberation ; and in the midst of her perplexities Ursula claimed admittance, and placing the Gazette in her hand, pointed out to her horror-struck eyes the ancient name of their house pointed out in large capitals to the detestation of the kingdom ! Yes, all was too true. Among the papers left by King James on his precipitate flight from Dublin, was a letter (addressed to the queen at St. Germain's) detailing a plan of assassination, whereby Sir Francis de Cressingham had undertaken to cut off his royal son-in-law !

“ This is no business for Keswycke's interference,” cried Millicent, drawing on her hood. “ For twenty cousins or twenty worlds I would not peril his noble name by entanglement in so vile a thing ;—but the queen loves me,—I will try my own influence over her heart. God has been merciful to her in sparing the lives of her father and husband in this unnatural conflict ; let her show mercy in return.”

When the Lady Keswycke's coach entered the quadrangle of the palace at Hampton, all appeared in confusion. Courtiers were thronging in on every side to tender loyal congratulations to her majesty, who was still occupied with her cabinet council ;—but on the announcement of a lady of the bedchamber, respectful way was made ;

and Milicent was able to take her seat nearest the door of the audience chamber, and await as patiently as she might the coming forth of the queen. No one approached her. The name of Cressingham seemed to have communicated some fatal infection to Lord Keswycke's wife. The courtiers and ladies of the household stood in groups afar off, smiling, and sneering, and admiring how soon the rumor of her family shame had brought the favorite of the queen to be a waiter in antechambers!——

But Milicent saw them not—heard them not—heeded them not! She had drawn her hood closer over her face. Her thoughts were far away in the dimness of years; her heart was back again in the green arbor. Again she seemed to see the fiery youth at her feet; again she seemed to shudder and recoil as he denounced her father to be a ruined man, and invited her to forsake him in his helplessness. But for that spot and that hour, she might now have been the wife of a convicted traitor and malefactor! Had she not cause for thankfulness to the Almighty Being, by whom her determination had been inspired?

But Milicent's prudence was about to encounter a new ordeal. On entering the presence, to which she was now hastily summoned, she discovered that she had to confront not only the

searching gaze of her royal mistress, but the wondering looks of her husband, and the somewhat supercilious smile of Bishop Burnet, who stood at the queen's right hand. Milicent's footsteps trembled for the first time on approaching an earthly throne; but after kissing the hand graciously extended towards her, she unhesitatingly kneeled down, and implored in simple terms the queen's clemency for her cousin, Sir Francis de Cressingham.

Never before had Lady Keswycke perceived the angry blood rise to the brow of her royal patroness! Mary, who resented not this bold application as a queen, but as a wife, hastily demanded, while her eyes sparkled with anger, whether the Lady Keswycke, in hazarding so audacious a supplication, could be aware of the crime of which that person stood accused?

Milicent clasped her hands, but said not a word in reply.

"Let me hear no more of this," said her majesty, seating herself beside the council table with an air of dignity she was rarely seen to assume, "*or I may be tempted to inquire to what strange influence over the wife of Lord Keswycke, the traitor Cressingham is indebted for this eager intercession!*"

Even this harsh taunt did not divert the lady from her purpose.

“Suffer me, madam, to forestall the question,” said she, striving to assume a composed demeanor:—and without rising from her kneeling position, and regardless of the stern gaze fixed by Keswycke and the queen upon her face, she proceeded to relate all;—her cousin’s hereditary devotion to the house of Stuart,—his intemperance of spirit,—his betrothment to herself,—his interest in the heart of her only sister.

Mary bent a significant look towards Lord Keswycke, who was visibly affected by the narration. “Rise!” said he, raising Milicent from her knees with an air of inexpressible dignity; “rise, my beloved wife, nor humble yourself further for this thing. Your kinsman is beyond reach of the mercy or the vengeance of kings. A price was set upon his head; and being overtaken, Francis de Cressingham perished in the ignoble scuffle of capture. See, madam,” said he, replying with proud consciousness to the glance of the queen, “my Milicent blanches not! Your majesty will now graciously admit that her petition arose not from any unworthy predilection. Blessed is the husband whose heart, in spite of insinuation—in spite of prejudice—in spite of every sinister appearance—is anchored in the unswerving prudence of a virtuous wife!”

It was a proud moment for Lady Keswycke. Mary, generously retracting her momentary

mistrust, caused the doors of the presence chamber to be thrown open, and walked forth into the gallery betwixt herself and her lord.

“For once, my lord, the text is at fault!” whispered the queen to Bishop Burnet, as she saw her two friends depart together in undiminished love and confidence:—“The children of this world are not *always* wiser in their generation than the children of light!”

## **RICH AND POOR.**

**ANONYMOUS.**

It is a common observation, and a very true one, that "one half of the world knows not how the other half is living." To some very poor people, it would be a wonderful sight, could they obtain access to the interior of a princely mansion, and not only behold the size and the furniture of the rooms, but the services of the table, and the gay and elegant company who seat themselves there with so much familiarity and ease, having never been accustomed to anything else. Still more astonished would they be, could they listen to the conversation, and understand it all; for they would discover that scarcely anything in life was esteemed as they esteem it, or calculated by the rule to which they had been accustomed.

It might happen, for instance, that a young lady, throwing herself listlessly upon a couch, would exclaim—"I should like to be poor, and live in an old thatched cottage, it is so delightfully picturesque!" or, "I wonder why poor people can't be satisfied without shoes. When I can do as I like, I shall have all *my* working-people wear a costume, with sandals, or wooden

shoes pointed and turned up at the toe. And then they eat such shocking things, and keep pigs, and make everything look so horrible around their cottages! *My* people shall live in the open air, and eat chestnuts, like the peasants in the south of France."

What would a poor cottager think to hear this, or a similar speech, from so benevolent a being, especially if the poor woman was one of those whose greatest glory was the possession of a pig, and the privilege of wearing a slouched bonnet, and a pair of leathern shoes?

On the other hand, how exceedingly ignorant are most of the children of affluence of what is going on within the habitations of the poor! Even if they look in occasionally, it is but for a passing moment, during which the poor people, embarrassed by the presence of their distinguished visitors, seldom talk or act like themselves. At all events, the actual means of their humble existence are not brought forward, nor is the wealthy stranger capable, from such limited intercourse, of forming any distinct idea of their actual mode either of living or thinking. The fact is, they *could not* understand it. The language of poverty is an unintelligible language to them, because they have no feelings in common with those who lie down at night not knowing from whence to-morrow's food is to come.



One thing is very remarkable in their character. It is the extraordinary generosity of the poor in comparison with that of the rich—not of the poor who want bread, for it would ill deserve the name of generosity, to give one day, knowing that they should have to beg the next; but such gifts as the widow's mite, cast into the treasury, do indeed deserve our admiration. Yes; the poor widow, with a child dependent on her labor, sometimes comes forward with her little gift, and casts it in, perhaps when no one sees her; and she does this out of pure benevolence, knowing that her name will not appear upon the printed lists of subscribers, and that her single mite will only be counted in as a penny, or a shilling, amongst hundreds of pounds. Nor is this all; she gives her mite, knowing, and perhaps her little boy knows too, that in consequence of giving it he will have to wait a whole week longer for his new pair of shoes, or that his mother will have to give up her ride in the passing coach on a little journey they were about to have taken together, and that they must therefore walk through the middle of the day along the hot and dusty road.

Such items as these have to be taken into account in all the little givings of the poor, and yet they do give in a manner which swells the charitable funds of the country at large to an amazing extent, considering that nothing they do in this

way can be done without the giving up of something pleasant or useful to themselves.

How different are the feelings with which the wealthy give! and how startled many a kind-hearted young lady would be, if told that because she had given a few shillings to some useful institution, she must walk five miles along the highway, or wait a whole week for the possession of a piece of music upon which her heart was set!

Helen Grafton was the only child of very wealthy parents, and so little accustomed to anything but the enjoyment of the indulgences which money can so easily procure, that she thought very little of it. Indeed, she had rather a fancy for being poor, as *she* regarded poverty; and talked a great deal about her love of the country, and rural scenery, and *rusticating*, as she was pleased to call it. Thus, when she went to stay with an aunt who lived in rather a quiet sort of rural way, she wrote long letters to her friends, sometimes under a tree, and sometimes with her shoes quite wet with the long grass, and called *this* doing as the poor people did in the country—living almost entirely in the open air, as they did, and enduring hardships like them.

If Helen Grafton possessed many of the faults to which youth is liable, idleness was certainly not amongst the number, unless a sort of busy

idleness might sometimes be laid to her charge ; for out of the various occupations to which her attention by turns was directed, very few useful results were ever brought to light. It is true, her property increased, her portfolios grew thicker and more numerous, and fresh means of accommodation had to be procured, year after year, to make place and room for the vast accumulation of papers, and patterns ; of things bought, and things borrowed ; of things lost, and things found ; which were accustomed to slide down in avalanches from the chairs and tables on to the floor of her apartment, whenever a pencil had to be sought for, or even when a seat was required. And Helen was so busy, too—so fully and so earnestly employed, that whenever she darted in amongst this accumulation of property—as she often did—with full and flowing dresses, some corner of a luckless drawing was sure to be caught, or some portfolio having arrived at that state of repletion when it could bear no more, and then down went the sliding masses, like the waves of an advancing tide, each particle extending farther than it was possible for human calculation to suppose it should.

Helen was a great sketcher. She drew from nature, but having never taken the trouble to acquire a knowledge of perspective, she found herself perpetually in the uncomfortable predicament

of seeing that her drawings were wrong, without being able to make them right. Thus, there naturally resulted an immense number and variety of *beginnings*, with very few conclusions, and such as there were, proved for the most part extremely unsatisfactory.

Indeed, Helen never could tell exactly how it was that no part of her buildings would *stand back*, that the recesses sometimes came out, and even stood before the parts which should project most. She was angry with her paper on some occasions—with her pencils on all; and the money that was spent in buying more of different kinds, would almost have satisfied the hunger of some of the poor families around her; while the vexation she endured tended very much to ruffle a temper naturally mild and sweet.

Perhaps Helen was too ambitious—perhaps like some *two* or *three* other young people, she wanted to arrive at once at the end, without the means. At all events, she had an eye to see that her own drawings were not what they ought to be; and thus, when any of her friends, knowing the time she spent in sketching, and observing the thickly-filled portfolios which lay about her room, expected a rich treat in seeing the result of so much labor, a thousand excuses had to be made, such as—"Oh! these are not set"—"That is merely a beginning"—"I had no

time to finish this ; and many other apologies of a similar nature, all cause for which might easily have been obviated by a little attention to perspective, a little perseverance, and a little common sense.

Helen certainly must have been ambitious, for she liked to go at once to some difficult subject ; and having heard much of the ruins of an old priory in the neighborhood of her aunt's residence, she lost no time in setting out with paper, pencils, and all necessary things to make a sketch of it, which was to be framed in the wood of an old oak growing hard by, and taken home to her parents as a proof of her industry and skill in the fine arts.

The scene of Helen Grafton's eagerly anticipated success, was in Devonshire ; and it consisted of a little village church connected with the ruins of a small priory, originally attached to Hartland Abbey ; but the most striking features in the scene were the extremely picturesque effect of the ancient walls and windows of the priory, richly hung with ivy, and in some places almost grown over, so as to form masses of green and beautiful foliage.

Helen believed she could draw this part of the picture well, for she had studied foliage attentively. Indeed, it is probable she could have drawn any single portion, for she was by no

means deficient in the use of her pencil. The unlucky part of the business was, that she could not put the different portions together for want of a knowledge of perspective. She never took into account that there is a certain rule by which objects become lessened in the distance, and enlarged when near the eye ; and that when we thus speak of the size of a thing, it is not the size it appears to us of itself, but the size it is proved to be when measured by another object placed at an equal distance from us.

"Let me see," said Helen, "I will draw the church first;" and she drew it so large, that when she came to the ruins, there was scarcely room for them, unless they were placed higher up in the picture, so they went back in consequence of being too small, and the church came forward and stood upon the foreground. Helen saw it was not right, but concluded, as she had often done before, that shading and filling up would help it ; so she turned her attention to the cattle, and to an old man who happened to be passing at the time. Recollecting that she had often been so far wrong in the perspective of her figures, that sometimes they had turned out giants, and sometimes fairies, she exclaimed to herself, "I will be right this time, however, with my old man ; for I see he looks just about as tall as that window in the ruin." She therefore

marked out his size upon a piece of waste paper, and let him pass on while she finished the cattle. This, it may readily be supposed, was not fully accomplished before the old man had found time to walk past the priory and church, even at his slow pace, and to get across the adjoining field, at the extremity of which he was still distinctly to be seen, when the artist wanted him again.

"And now for my old man," said Ellen, with a good deal of satisfaction, for she had done the cattle, as she thought, *well*; and taking up the piece of waste paper, she compared the measurement of the man with the tiny little figure now a great way off.

"How strange!" exclaimed Ellen, as she looked first at one and then at the other. "I suppose this is what people mean by perspective, for I find my old man in the distance is scarcely so long as the head of a cow which is near. How very strange!" and she took up a book and held it edgeways near her face, and saw that to her eye, in that position, it was a great deal longer than the church was high.

"I see, then," said Ellen to herself, "that the size of every object depends upon its distance from our eyes, and that our only rule in measuring, is by some other object placed at exactly the same distance. I do think I will set about learning perspective; it would be so useful to know,

when I have drawn one object, exactly how large to make all the rest, so that they may appear to be in their proper places."

With this new idea, and this laudable resolution, Helen was returning to the residence of her aunt; when, having to pass along a very pretty valley, she was struck again with the picturesque effect of a number of cows standing idly in the bed of a broad and shallow stream, lashing the flies from their sides and cooling themselves in the fresh clear water.

Having failed in her sketch of the priory, Helen determined to make one more attempt, in order that she might have something to show on her return, for she had been a long time out; and besides detaining her aunt's servant, who waited patiently beside her, she knew that her aunt was never so dissatisfied as when, at the close of a day, she was unable to say that she had really accomplished any one thing. Seizing a happy opportunity, therefore, she seated herself beneath the shade of a tree, and had begun the second cow, after pleasing herself very well with the first, when the loud shouting of a boy on the bank of the stream startled the cattle from their luxurious enjoyment, and reminded them that they were expected to return to their accustomed evening milking in the village.

It was an interruption not to be borne by one





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in Helen's situation, for she was one of the rich, and the cows belonged to the comparatively poor, on whose behalf this boy was employed to bring them home from their pasture twice every day. It was an interruption not to be borne, either, by one who had never given herself the trouble to think whether cows were created for any other purpose than to be sketched. So Helen set about to reprimand the boy very severely, and having *settled* him, as she thought, most effectually, she turned again to her delightful occupation, which she enjoyed all the more, from the beautiful situation in which she was seated, the repose of everything around her, and the consciousness that she herself was no unlovely picture, with her dog sleeping at her feet.

It was not many minutes, however, before Helen was interrupted again by the boy.

"If you please, Miss," said he, "I am behind my time, and the people will all be waiting for their milk."

"Never mind!" said Ellen, deeply buried in her occupation—"Let them wait."

"But they *won't* wait," remonstrated the boy.

"They *must* wait," said Helen. "It can make very little difference to them, I should think. At all events, I mean to finish my drawing, so you may go about your business."

"My business is to fetch the cows, Miss."

"How troublesome you are!" exclaimed Helen. "There, take that," she added, throwing the boy a sixpence.

This procured her a little quiet, but the boy, calculating the consequences to himself of any further delay, wisely concluded that it would require a much greater sum than sixpence to remunerate him for the loss of his situation.

"I cannot wait any longer," said he. "I am bound to get the cows in at five o'clock, or I lose my situation, and I know there's Jack Milford ready to catch it any day."

"Then I'll make a bargain with you," said Helen. "If you will leave me alone, and not frighten the cows for half an hour, I'll give you half-a-crown. See, there it is."

The half-crown looked large—much larger than the sixpence. The annual village fair was about to take place. The boy already held his sixpence—half-a-crown more would make a rich man of him. It was too great a temptation. He advanced to receive his bribe, with awkwardness and confusion, for he knew he was doing wrong; and then throwing himself down upon the bank, endeavored to go to sleep, and forget the impending consequences.

As ignorant as the pencil she held in her hand what those consequences would be, Helen Grafton went on with her sketch, and many a one

besides Ellen has gone on in a much worse manner, gratifying the whim of the moment at the expense of others, simply because they were rich, and had never been acquainted with the necessities of the poor.

But what, all this while, was taking place in the village, and what were the people saying and doing to whom the cows belonged ?

Great was the consternation of many of them, when, at the close of a busy day, they were about to prepare for their evening meal, and saw not the accustomed welcome sight of the patient cows wending their quiet way up the shady lane which led from the green pasture to the village green. Once or twice a little girl was sent out to see if they were not coming, and then a little boy was sent after the girl, and both staid out upon the brow of the hill, having no doubt whatever but the cows would appear every moment. Then came the elder maiden, on her way from the pump, setting down her pail of water, and running to see what the children were about ; and then peered out from the cottage-door the angry matron, asserting her belief that as a last calamity she should have to go too, and never doubting, if she did so, but that cows and children would all come home together, just as they ought.

Nor was this all. The want of milk began to be felt by many different portions of the commu-

nity. Mrs. Staines, the dressmaker, had a few friends to tea that afternoon. The kettle was boiling on the fire; the tea had been made half an hour, and the milk had not come. So she sent out her apprentice with orders to seek up the milk-boy, and scold him well, and to tell his mother she should have no more of her custom; but as it only amounted to half a pint a day, the calamity was not of the magnitude which might have been supposed from the manner in which the threat was given.

Then there was her next-door neighbor, the solitary schoolmaster, a poor little sickly man, who had waited for the milk so long that there was no time to make his tea at all; and he, having an engagement to wait upon a rich gentleman, was obliged to go, faint and hungry as he was, and to receive a good scolding from the footman into the bargain, for being ten minutes behind his time.

Then again, a little lower down the street, was a whole family of children, cross and hungry, and consequently in a state of uproar and rebellion, when their father's housekeeper rushed in, after having looked in her turn down the lane; and she having nothing else to do, and being a rigid disciplinarian, thought it best the children should be all well whipped, and sent to bed without their suppers, in order to teach them better

manners, in case the milk should fail to come another time.

Nor was the calamity of the non-arrival of the milk confined to this class of the community alone. Hard by that village stood a little parsonage, and the pastor, though a very worthy man, was a little apt to be put out when anything went wrong. Old-fashioned and early were the habits of the parsonage, and even here the milk was wanted for the pastor's tea long before it came. So, what did the worthy pastor do? He went out himself to meet the milk-boy, and told him to tell his mother—she was a poor widow—that he should have no more milk from her—that he knew those who would serve him better; and that if poor people would not take pains to accommodate their friends—their *real* friends—they must expect to want.

But the worst consequences fell upon the sick and the suffering; and amongst these was a poor consumptive girl, lying in an attic chamber, upon which the afternoon sun shone fiercely all that summer time. This girl had been ordered by the parish doctor to take milk, and as it was the only thing she took with pleasure, her mother worked hard to pay for it, and a great luxury it seemed to them both when the pure fresh draught came in; for the girl was very feverish, and though a good and patient child at other times, she was, as the

fond mother confessed, a little teasing about the milk when it did not come in time. And this day she was more restless and impatient than usual, until at last she grew so fretful, that her mother, who was sorely tried, spoke sharply to her, and then the big tears rolled fast from her large blue eyes ; and the mother wept too, and begged her forgiveness, for she knew that the time was fast coming, when her child would be no more there to receive her tenderness or bear with her rebuke.

And what was Helen, the child of wealthy parents, and the unconscious cause of these and many more disasters, doing all this time ? She was shading off the shoulder of a cow, and adding a little depth to the shadows in the water, and tipping some foliage by the side of the stream, and holding up her drawing this way and that, and pleasing herself with the idea of the praises she would hear on her return. Thus, then, with her head full of the importance of her own occupation, and her heart full of self-satisfaction, she rose up from her pleasant seat beneath the tree, and giving the boy her gracious permission to drive the cows away, walked cheerfully home, esteeming herself quite as highly as if she had been the benefactress of the whole parish.

To Helen's great delight, she did receive that day a great deal of praise, not only for the really

pretty drawing she had brought home, but for having persevered in a second, after she had failed in the first. Of course her aunt knew nothing of her plan of detaining the cow-boy, for Helen attached no importance to it whatever, until a few days afterwards, when speaking of the impertinence and unreasonableness of this class of people, she detailed the whole affair to her aunt, simply as an instance of the daring presumption of a vulgar little fellow who knew no better than to disturb the cattle she was sketching.

It is needless to say that the elder lady took a very different view of the subject from that taken by her niece, for she was one whose pleasure it was to go much amongst the poor, and to make herself really acquainted with their circumstances and sufferings; and although in the present instance it was impossible for her to know the extent of the inconvenience which Helen's want of consideration had occasioned, she clearly understood how this kind of ignorance on the part of the niece, might lead her in after-life to do many things absolutely cruel and unjust in her transactions with the poor.

In order to prevent such consequences, Mrs. Grafton became more frequently the companion of her niece, and even accompanied her in many of her rural rambles, often sitting patiently beside



her while she made her unsatisfactory sketches ; but always endeavoring, as far as she could, to lead her to think more about others, and less about herself ; but especially to remember that the poor are as deserving of consideration as the rich, and often need it a great deal more.

“ Now this is exactly what I like ! ” exclaimed Helen, one day, stopping suddenly on the edge of a wild common, just as there started into view a little cottage, with a most ruinous gable, and broken thatch, over which had been laid some loose beams, and branches of green wood, as if to secure more effectually the little shelter which remained. “ This is exactly what I like,” repeated Helen, as her eye revelled amongst the “ choice bits,” as she had heard other young lady-sketchers call the rugged edges and shady hollows of the picturesque subjects from which they drew.

The “ choice bits ” in this instance were such as required the eye of an artist to appreciate, for they consisted chiefly of holes in the wall without windows, and a yawning gap in the gable overhung by black rafters and broken thatch ; the whole building looking so unlike a human habitation, that when a little child, suddenly startled from its play amongst the furze of the common, ran hastily in, Mrs. Grafton was inclined to think it must belong to some wandering tribe of gip-

sies, who had made the hut their shelter for the night.

The dwelling, however, was not altogether so ruinous as the first aspect, so enchanting to the eye of our artist, would have led the observer to suppose. Another view of it gave a somewhat different character; for here one window at least had been repaired, the thatch renewed, and other proofs of care were not wanting, to show to a certain extent what the necessities of human life require.

"How shocking!" exclaimed Helen quite indignant at the building up of a new piece of wall, "I have no patience with people who spoil everything in this manner. And see here! actually a square window-frame painted white! I will have no windows in *my* cottages, when I am mistress of my own affairs."

"Nor inhabitants either, I should think," said her aunt, "if such are your plans."

"Oh yes," replied Helen, "I will have such cottages as Gainsborough always painted, really wretched, and such children too."

"Always orphans, I suppose," observed Mrs. Grafton.

"Always ragged, at all events;" said Helen. "But do let us go round again to that charming gable, for I see there is nothing to be done here." And saying this, Helen seated herself upon a

high green bank, and opened out her portfolio, while her aunt stood a little way off, musing, and thinking very deeply about what might possibly be the circumstances and situation of the inhabitants of that miserable dwelling.

"Hark!" said Mrs. Grafton, advancing after a few minutes towards her niece, and stooping down so as to whisper near her ear; "did you not hear a low moan?" she asked; "I am sure there was something like a human voice."

"I heard nothing but the moan of the wind," said Helen, "through the old broken wall. I delight in such sounds. They add so much effect to a scene like this."

"Again!" said Mrs. Grafton. "I cannot be mistaken. There must be some one in distress." And the kind-hearted lady would have made her way into the interior of that comfortless dwelling, had not the figure of a man, accompanied by a fine white dog, at that moment approached, walking across the common with an air of gloomy despondency, as if too much absorbed by his own thoughts to observe that any one was near. This man laid his hand upon the latch of the door, and stood still for some time, evidently irresolute whether to enter or not; or as if wishing to assure himself by some sound or sign of what was going on within, before proceeding farther. At last the door opened, then closed upon his

receding figure, and for a moment all was still. Loud voices, however, were soon heard, and angry threatening tones; while Mrs. Grafton, who had approached nearer to the window, could discover that something had been eagerly expected by those within the cottage, which the entrance of that man had failed to realize; and the bitter reproaches which now and then reached her ear, deterred her from making any nearer approaches at so unpropitious a time.

It was not long before the unwelcome guest again left the house, taking with him the dog, which he called to his side, and ever and anon stooped down to caress, with a fondness which appeared somewhat extraordinary in one of his firm and manly aspect.

"I must know what is the matter with these people," said Mrs. Grafton; but her niece, who was seated farther from the cottage, still deeply absorbed in her occupation, made no reply; and she entered alone, with her accustomed kind and sympathizing manner, which seldom failed to win the confidence and respect of the poor.

The history of the interior of that cottage was soon told; and, oh! how unlike it was to anything which a delicate and refined young lady would wish to portray! It was a history of want—perhaps of wickedness; but that Mrs. Grafton did not ask, for she could see at one glance that

the last moments of life were ebbing fast away from one, who, evidently in the prime of life, lay stretched upon a bed of suffering, and, it might soon be, of death.

What a contrast did this scene present to the ideal pictures Helen Grafton was perpetually drawing of the beauty of poverty, and the poetry of wretchedness and ruin ! It is well enough, in its way, to look at the picturesque effect of everything ; but it is a very inferior way to that in which a benevolent and thoughtful mind will regard even a forlorn cottage on a wild common ; and more especially, a cottage in which sickness, suffering, or death, are occupying the attention of its inmates. Not that young ladies are called upon to run headlong into all wretched-looking hovels to relieve the immediate wants of the poor. Until they know how to relieve them in the best manner, they are for the most part much better occupied on the outside, even in making drawings of ruined walls, and broken thatch. But they need not go so far as wholly to overlook the sufferings which they are unable to relieve, and still less to settle it in their own minds that poverty must be agreeable, because it makes interesting pictures.

Mrs. Grafton had learned enough in the interior of that humble dwelling to know that the extreme of want—nay, that absolute hunger—

was wasting away the gaunt forms of its cheerless occupants. And in addition to this, she had learned that the worst accompaniment of want, a murmuring and reproachful disposition, had turned the spirit of the daughter against the father, and sometimes that of the husband against his wife. In the present instance, however, the father, that solitary and friendless-looking man, who had entered and gone forth again with his dog, was the offender against whom the heaviest complaints were laid ; for he had again and again been urged to dispose of his dog, and bring home the profits to share with his famishing family ; and after repeated promises that he would comply—after even confessing that he had had a very respectable sum of money offered for it—he had returned with the unconscious animal still cheerfully trotting by his side—the only living thing in the whole world, as he often told them, that followed him for love.

In fact, he was about as lonely in the world as a man could be, his wife having died young, and his only daughter being married to a man of low and selfish habits, who scrupled not to tell him he was an unwelcome guest, except only when he brought an unusual amount of profit to the general stock ; for they all lived together in their miserable way, regarded as the very offscouring of society, and but seldom employed in any repu-

table manner. The father was certainly the best of them, though somewhat idle and improvident ; but he was a man who had seen better days, and had known what it was to have a decent home, a warm hearth to call his own, and a table to which he could even ask a friend. He had a certain softness of heart too, which had made him indulge and spoil his only child, mistaking that for true kindness ; and he had so neglected her education, that all the family had gone down together, and no respectable person like to have anything to do with them.

A great lover of dogs and horses, and well skilled in his management of both, this poor man had earned a precarious livelihood by wandering about the country, sometimes employed by the farmers, and sometimes not employed at all ; but always to be seen in company with his dog, whether facing the wild snow-storm on the bleak hill-side, lounging idly through the summer's evening about the door of the village inn, or creeping in, when his slender means were all exhausted, beneath the shelter of some cow-shed or hedge-row in the fields, where his untiring friend—for even he had *one* friend—would nestle closely by his side, as faithful and as happy as if it shared the cushion of a queen.

Ignorant of all that was going on within and about the cottage, and equally uninterested in the

situation of its inmates, Helen proceeded carefully with her sketch, for she had been wise enough to pay some little attention to perspective, and was thus able to prevent her picture looking absolutely distorted and offensive. Her only cause of dissatisfaction in the present instance, was, that all parts of the cottage were not equally ruinous, that a portion of the newly-built wall would force itself into sight; and in short that so barbarous an idea as that of repairing and rebuilding should ever have got abroad in the world.

While the mind of Helen was vaguely wandering on subjects like these, her aunt was very differently occupied. Having hastened home without a moment's delay, after discovering the sad condition of the sick man, she now returned with a servant carrying a basket well laden with different kinds of provisions, and things necessary for sufferers in so pitiable a situation; and having seen some of the provisions well bestowed, and having given directions respecting others, she then sat down to talk on subjects of a different nature, hoping that under the pressure of sickness and affliction, the hearts of those miserable people might be softened, so as to listen to the important truths she made her constant study to communicate in such a manner as neither to weary nor offend.



Having spent as long a time in the cottage as she thought prudent for a first visit, Mrs. Grafton returned to her niece with her own mind so full of what had passed, that she began, without a moment's hesitation, to relate the history of all she had heard and seen.

"How charming!" exclaimed Helen, interrupting her aunt. "I never dreamt I should have been able to make that wall really stand back so well as it does."

"I don't think," continued Mrs. Grafton, "the poor man will continue many days."

"Just wait one moment, if you please," said Helen.

"And that hungry mother with her young babe!" said the aunt. "I never saw a famishing infant before."

"How ridiculous!" exclaimed Helen, "really that I should never have taken up perspective before!"

"I am afraid the man is insensible to his situation," observed the aunt. "He shows no sign of feeling beyond the suffering of the moment."

"I wish they would leave their door open," said the niece. "Don't you think, dear aunt, we might ask them to leave it just half open, you know?"

But by this time the patience of the elder lady was quite exhausted, and in an unusually prompt

and decided manner, she desired her niece to put away her pencils, and return immediately home. Their walk was a silent one, for their minds were so differently occupied, that it would not have been easy to carry on any connected conversation; and besides this difficulty, Mrs. Grafton was thinking very earnestly how it would be possible to impress the mind of her niece with any right conviction, that there were other things in the world of quite as much importance as herself, and her own trifling affairs.

The grave thoughts of the aunt, however, were suddenly interrupted by an exclamation of delight from her niece, on coming suddenly in sight of a man seated on the knotted roots of an old tree, with his arm resting over a dog which seemed determined to steal up and lick his face, as if in the superabundance of its affection and its joy.

"What a sweet picture!" said Helen, "and that dear, lovely dog! Do you think the man would give it to me?"

"Perhaps he would *sell* it," replied Mrs. Grafton, recognizing in the person of the man, the same individual who had left the cottage.

"Do you want to part with your dog?" asked Helen, without a moment's hesitation, as soon as she had reached the spot.

"Not exactly *that*," replied the man.

"You want to *sell* it, I suppose," said Helen, "at the best price you can get?"

"That I *want* to sell him," said the man, "is not quite the truth—that I *must* sell him, would be nearer the mark, miss."

"Suppose I give you half-a-crown?" said Helen.

The man shook his head; and Mrs. Grafton looked on in silence, determined to see what her niece would do, before she interfered.

"The dog is worth a million of money to me," said the man. "He once saved my life."

"I would be enchanted with a dog that would save *my* life," said Helen. "Suppose I give you five shillings?"

But the man still shook his head; and Helen went on to ask him how he could afford to keep a dog, and to tell him how much better off he would be without it, provided he was poor, as indeed he seemed to be.

"I know all that," said the man; "or at least, if I don't know it, it is n't for want of having it told me. To cut the matter short, I'll take a guinea for the dog—not a farthing less. No, I'll drown him first."

"I have a great mind to give the man a guinea," said Helen to her aunt. "He looks extremely poor, and he must be a good kind of man, or he would not be so fond of his dog."



*The Iron Road*

"Do as you please," said Mrs. Grafton.

"There, then," said Helen, holding out the gold. "Now the dog is mine!"

"Not yet," murmured the man, bending forward, and stooping over his dog, so as to conceal the workings of his face from observation. "You and I, old fellow," he continued, "were never parted before. How do you think you shall like it—eh?"

"He is shedding tears, I do declare!" whispered Helen to her aunt. "Oh! I am so glad I have bought his dog! We *ought* to be kind to such people, ought we not, dear aunt?"

But the kindness of the aunt was of a very different description from that of the niece. "Come, come!" said she, "we have let this folly go on a little too far. Keep your poor dog," said she to the man; "we have no intention of depriving you of the only friend you seem to have in the world."

"I *must* part with him," said the man. "I have not a farthing, and they will never let me take him within the door again."

"Don't go within their door yourself," said Mrs. Grafton. "Why should you?"

"Because I have no other roof to shelter me," replied the man.

"Do you think you would work if you had a

chance to do better for yourself, and keep your dog?" asked the lady.

"Would I not, ma'am!" said he. "Ah! you don't know all!"

"But I know a great deal," replied his benevolent friend; "and I am determined to make the trial if you will but work and keep away from bad company, and give up your wandering, idle habits. If I find you industrious and honest, I will give you wages that will enable you to live decently, and to keep your dog into the bargain."

The man uncovered his head, and with clasped hands, poured forth such a torrent of eloquent but genuine gratitude, that Helen could not help wishing she had remembered at first how much kinder it would have been to assist the poor man, without at the same time depriving him of his dog.

## **THE BRIDAL GIFT.**

**BY MRS. FAIRLIE.**

**EMILY F.** was the daughter of a lady who, since her widowhood, had seen much adversity. **Mrs. F.** was of good family, and her deceased husband had been highly respected and eminent in his profession. Many of their children had fallen victims to consumption, and there now only remained three of a once numerous family: **Emily, Charles and Edward** were their names. They were all remarkable for personal beauty; **Emily's** was of the most feminine and delicate character. Her hair was of a light and glossy brown, and peculiarly abundant; her eyes deep blue, her cheeks faintly tinted with pink, but her lips were of the brightest hue. Such were her charms; and the portrait of her, which was painted when she was on the eve of marriage with one to whom she was most fondly attached, conveys but an inadequate idea of their perfection. **Albert** was but three years her senior, and was in every respect a suitable match for her. His parents already loved her as their own child, and all who knew them began to think that for once

the course of true love must run smooth. The wedding day was fixed, and Emily took a natural and innocent delight in looking at the bridal apparel, and simple but elegant accessories to a female toilet, which were gifts from her present and future relatives. Albert was not wealthy, and consequently diamonds, pearls, and rubies, India shawls and costly robes were not there: nor did the happy girl for one moment regret their absence; and her lover, when he saw her glossy ringlets and fair and polished brow, thought plumes and a tiara would almost mar their beauty.

Eagerly did Emily gaze from her chamber window at the hour when Albert usually arrived, and gladly did she hail him when he came. Bright visions of years of bliss floated before them both, and they were never weary of painting their future home. Alas! their hopes were doomed to be unfulfilled. Albert was seized with sudden illness. Medical aid, and the attentions of fond relatives and of an adoring girl were unavailing; and, on the day previous to that which should have shone on her nuptials, Emily had to deplore the death of her lover.

I need not try to paint the anguish of her feelings. Vainly should I waste words to describe that which all can well imagine. Yet Emily sorrowed not as "one without hope;" she had



the blessed conviction that her Albert's virtues had secured to him an eternal abode in those happy regions where there is no parting, where tears cease to flow, and where hearts ache not. Time soothed the violence of her sorrow, but she felt no less than at the first, how totally irreparable was her loss. She spoke not of her departed Albert, but her thoughts were ever with him.

It was about two years after the death of her lover that Emily became acquainted with Lord L. He was a young man of prepossessing manners and appearance, and possessed of a large fortune. His heart was soon bestowed on the gentle and lovely girl, and he paid her many kind and unobtrusive attentions. Lord L. was totally unacquainted with Emily's previous engagement, and attributed to the alteration in her fortune that depression which arose from disappointed affection. Emily believed that he was acquainted with her sad story, and was grateful for his delicate and silent regard ; but she knew not the nature or depth of his feelings. She was therefore much surprised, and really grieved, when he one day avowed his love, and besought her to become his bride. She burst into tears, and for some moments was unable to speak. At length she was about to reply, but a visitor was announced, and ere she had time to say more than "I will write to you," a giddy, fashionable acquaintance entered

the room, who exhibited no intention of a speedy departure. Consequently, in a brief time Lord L. took his leave, wearied by the frivolity, which would at any period have annoyed him, but which now very quickly exhausted his patience.

It was nearly an hour ere Emily bade adieu to the intruder; she then flew to her mother, whom slight indisposition had confined to her apartment. On naming to her the proposal she had received, Mrs. F. exclaimed, "How fortunate, how delightful!"

"Delightful!" echoed her daughter; "my dearest mother, I do not understand these expressions."

"Why, what parent would not rejoice at her daughter having engaged the affections of so amiable, agreeable, and in every way charming a young man as Lord L.?"

"Nay, you should pity him," said Emily, "since I believe him sincere in his professions of regard, and he will consequently feel much disappointment when I shall tell him how utterly impossible it is that I should ever marry."

"And why, Emily, should you never marry?"

"Dear mother, can you ask that question?—can you believe me so mean as to wed for wealth and rank?"

"You dislike Lord L., then?" said Mrs. F.

"Oh! no; I think him an amiable and agreea-

ble young man, with much good sense, and high and honorable feeling. I have never met with one whom I would more gladly hail as the husband of my sister, had I one ; but, dearest mother, I can never love again ; my heart lies in the tomb of Albert."

Tears flowed abundantly as she concluded, and for some time they were both silent. At length Mrs. F. resumed :

"I have, I believe, Emily, always been a kind and tender parent to you."

"You have, you have, indeed !" interrupted her daughter.

"And I have never been unreasonable or unjust. Emily, were Albert living, I would not urge you to marry another, though a reigning sovereign should ask you for his bride. But, he is gone, and since Lord L. is not personally disagreeable to you—since you know and appreciate his many amiable and estimable qualities, I beseech you not to refuse the happy and brilliant position which is now offered to you. I am aware that a young and ardent girl imagines that it is necessary to be *violently in love* when she marries. You say *you* can never be so more ; but trust me, my dear child, respect, esteem, and regard, will make you as happy as, or even perhaps happier than, love could do."

Did Mrs. F. believe her own words ? I doubt

it; at any rate she failed to convince her daughter. But I will not detail the many conversations which took place between the ladies; suffice it to say, Emily agreed that her mother should see Lord L. the following day and explain to him her feelings.

When her eldest son returned that evening, Mrs. F. was closeted with him for some time. He told her he was sure Lord L. was in total ignorance of Albert ever having existed; and strongly urged her not to mention to his lordship the circumstances of his sister's attachment.

"Of course," added he, "Emily feels at first a little dislike to form a new engagement. It is natural, since it recalls more vividly the memory of poor Albert. He was a fine, noble fellow, and any girl might have liked him; but L. is also an excellent young man; he is besides handsome and rich, and Emily will soon insensibly become attached to him. I would let her imagine he knew all her former history, whilst, in fact, I would tell him she was not prepared to give a decided answer at present, and keep him in a little suspense, at the same time giving great hopes (which I think you reasonably may) of a final satisfactory reply."

Mrs. F. highly approved of her son's scheme, and acted accordingly. Some months afterwards, Lord L., who had continued his visits, again be-

sought Miss F. to become his wife. His letter was a rare specimen of ardent affection and good sense. Had it by any accident fallen into the hands of an uninterested stranger, it would, unlike the generality of love letters, have failed to excite a smile of derision. This epistle had its due effect with Emily ; and her relatives so strongly urged her, that she at length gave her consent. She now strove as much as possible to banish all remembrance of other days. Lord L. was fond of the splendor which became his wealth and rank, yet his taste was not gaudy. His house in town was furnished with elegance and beauty, but simplicity. The jewels with which he presented his bride were equally neat and costly. Her boudoir was a little paradise. The choicest works of English and foreign authors, in the most elegant bindings, adorned the bookshelves ; beautiful plants, among which, Emily's favorite, the moss rose, was conspicuous, shed a delicious odor around. The chimney-piece was supported on either side by Cupid and Psyche, two beautiful marble figures from the chisel of the younger Westmacott. A magnificent Tournay carpet covered the floor ; a few exquisite pictures of the ancient school, and one by a modern artist, but beautifully finished, hung upon the walls. The last was a portrait of Lord L. All that affection could imagine, art invent, and wealth

purchase, was united to adorn the boudoir of the fair Emily.

At length, the 12th of May, the day so anxiously anticipated by Lord L., arrived. His sisters were to be the bride's maids, and as they assisted to adorn the gentle Emily for the nuptial ceremony, they formed a lovely group. Fanny was just arranging the fall of the bridal veil, when Bertha, gazing from the window, exclaimed, "Here comes Edgar! naughty boy, why this is quite contrary to all etiquette; the bride and bridegroom should meet for the first time on their wedding day, at the altar. Look, Emily, how beautiful the new carriage looks, and what splendid bay horses."

Emily could only faintly smile, and echo the word "beautiful."

"See! the carriage drives away again; Edgar has left a parcel," continued Bertha, and she ran out of the room to meet the servant who brought it. A little note contained these words:—

"I send my beloved Emily some of our family jewels. The pearls, love, are less delicately fair than thou, and cannot add to thy beauty, yet wear them for the sake of thine adoring

"L."

The bride's maids eagerly opened the case, but started back with affrighted looks and exclamations of horror. Emily bent forward to discover

the cause of their alarm, and beheld *a set of jet ornaments*. She was not superstitious, yet who can wonder that the color forsook her cheeks, and a sick, faint feeling came over her? She strove to conquer it, however, and succeeded.

The time had arrived for the party to assemble at the church. Lord L. met his bride at the door of the sacred edifice, and perceiving her neck and arms were unadorned, "Why," said he, "did not my Emily wear my bridal gift? surely the ornaments were meet to adorn her on her nuptial day."

The brow of the gentle maiden, which had the previous moment worn a smile of chastened sadness, became overcast. The sad recollection of Albert obtruded on her heart, and she muttered to herself, "Yes! funereal emblems are meet for her whose heart is in the grave."

But L. heard her not, for his sisters were chidingly telling him of the strange and disagreeable mistake he had made in sending a mourning suit instead of one of orient pearls. He naturally felt considerable annoyance; but at this moment they were called to the altar, and in a few minutes the vows were pronounced which bound him for life to the object of his ardent affection.

Congratulations passed round. I need not pause to describe the *dejeuné*, nor the company. Emily changed her bridal attire for a more usual

style of dress; and the next day's paper announced that "the happy pair left town, in a travelling chariot and four, for L. Hall, the bridegroom's splendid seat in Herts."

Nothing could exceed the kindness and devoted attention shown by Lord L. to his beautiful Emily; and she felt the deepest gratitude towards him, but she could not reciprocate his passion. The idea that she had broken her vows to Albert haunted her; and her health and spirits declined daily. At the end of a fortnight they returned to town. Mrs. F. assisted Lord L. to nurse the gentle patient, and his fair sisters strove to amuse her mind, but in vain. To them, as well as their brother, the cause of her too evident grief was a mystery.

On the 12th of June, many of those who that day month had assisted at the wedding, were again assembled in the same church. The same minister officiated; but now, as he opened the book, his hand trembled, and tears rendered his voice scarcely audible as he read the burial service! The remains of the fair and gentle Emily were committed to the earth. And her fond husband, knew he what had slain her? Yes; she left these lines for him:—

"I have striven, but in vain, dear Edgar, to bear up against my grief. The effort was beyond



my strength. Forget me, and seek in a union with another that bliss which there was but little hope of your finding with her whose heart has long been in the tomb. Forgive me, dear, kind Edgar. Indeed, indeed, I strove to be happy, and it was not your fault I was not so. You knew how I had loved Albert. I never could speak to you on the subject, but my mother told me all you said. Heaven bless you, and assist you in a second and more fortunate choice.

“EMILY.”

“And *I* have killed her,” said he, when he had perused the scroll. “Had she remained faithful to her first vows, she might have lived for years.”

“Dear Edgar,” urged his sisters, “you knew not of her previous attachment. On her mother and brothers rests the blame.”

Edgar mournfully shook his head and left the room.

“Poor, dear brother,” said Fanny, “he deserved a happier fate.”

More than a year after, Lord L. and his sisters were met by some English travellers at Nice. He was there for the restoration of his health, and hoping to find in change of scene a balm to soothe his griefs.

## **THE BRIGHTON COACH.**

**BY THEODORE HOOK.**

**A friend, on whose veracity I can perfectly rely, told me the following story ; whether a repetition of it may interest a reader, I cannot say ; but I will hazard the experiment.**

**I WAS once (said my friend) placed in a situation of peculiar embarrassment ; the event made a strong impression on me at the time—an impression, indeed, which has lasted ever since.**

**Those who know as well as I do, and have known as long as I have known, that once muddy, shabby, dirty, fishing-town on the Sussex coast, which has grown, under the smiles and patronage of our late beloved king, into splendor and opulence, called Brighton, will be aware that there run to it and from it, divers and sundry most admirable public conveyances in the shape of stage coaches ; that the rapid improvements in that sort of travelling have, during late years, interfered with, and greatly injured the trade of posting ; and that people of the first respectability think it no shame to pack themselves up in a Brighton coach, and step out of it at Charing-cross exactly five hours after they have stepped into it, in Castle-square.**

The gallant gay Stevenson, with his prancing greys under perfect command, used to attract a crowd to see him start; and now, although he, poor fellow, is gone that journey whence no traveller returns, Goodman still survives, and the "Times" still flourishes; in that, is the principal scene of my embarrassment laid; and to that admirable, neat, and expeditious equipage must I endeavor to attract your attention for some ten minutes.

It was one day in the autumn of 1829, just as the Pavilion clock was striking three, that I stepped into Mr. Goodman's coach. In it, I found already a thin stripling enveloped in a fur pelisse, the only distinguishing mark of whose sex was a tuft of mustachio on his upper lip. He wore a travelling-cap on his head, girt with a golden band, and eyed me and his other fellow-traveller as though we had been of a different race of beings from himself.

That other fellow-traveller I took to be a small attorney. He was habited in a drab great coat, which matched his round, fat face in color; his hair, too, was drab and his hat was drab; his features were those of a young pig; and his recreation through the day was sucking barley-sugar, to which he perpetually kept helping himself from a neat, white paper parcel of the luscious commodity, which he had placed in the pocket of the coach window.

There was one other passenger to take up, and I began wondering what it would be like, and whether it would be male or female, old or young, handsome or ugly, when my speculations were speedily terminated by the arrival of an extremely delicate pretty woman, attended by her maid. The lady was dressed in the extreme of plainness, and yielded the palm of gaiety to her *soubrette*, who mounted by the side of Mr. Goodman, at the moment that her mistress placed herself next my pig-faced friend and opposite to me.

It does not require half a second of time to see and know and understand what sort of woman it is who is thus brought into juxtaposition with one. The turn of her mind may be ascertained by the way she seats herself in her corner; her disposition, by the look she gives to her companions; and her character—but perhaps that may require a minute or two more.

The lady in question cast a hasty glance round her, merely, as it should seem, to ascertain if she were personally acquainted with any of her companions. She evidently was not; and her eyes sank from the inquiring gaze round the party upon a black silk bag which lay on her lap. She was about four or five and twenty; her eyes were blue and her hair fair; it hung carelessly over her forehead, and the whole of her costume gave evidence of a want of attention to what is called

"setting one's self off to the best advantage." She was tall—thin—pale; and there was a sweet expression in her countenance which I shall never forget; it was mild and gentle, and seemed to be formed to its plaintive cast by suffering—and yet why should one so lovely be unhappy?

As the clock struck, we started. The sudden turn of the team round the corner of North-street and Church-street brought a flush of color into her cheeks; she was conscious of the glow which I was watching; she seemed ashamed of her own timidity. She looked up to see if she was observed; she saw she was, and looked down again.

All this happened in the first hundred and seventy yards of a journey of fifty-two miles and a half.

My pig-faced friend, who sucked his barley-sugar sonorously, paid little attention to anybody, or anything, except himself; and, in pursuance of that amiable tenderness, pulled up the window at his side. The lady, like the beau in the fur coat, laid her delicate head back in the corner of the coach, and slept, or seemed to sleep.

The horror I felt lest my pig-faced friend should consider it necessary to join in any conversation which I might venture to originate with my unknown beauty opposite, kept me quiet;

and I "ever and anon" looked anxiously towards his vacant features, in hopes to see the two grey unmeaning things which served him for eyes, closed in a sweet and satisfactory slumber. But no; although he spoke not, and, if one may judge by countenances, thought not, still he kept awake, and ready, as it should seem, to join in a conversation which he had not courage to begin.

And so we travelled on, and not one syllable was exchanged until we reached Crawley. There my heart was much relieved. At Hands-cross we had dropped the cornet with the tufts; horses were ready to convey him to some man's house to dinner; and, when we were quitting Crawley, I saw my excellent demolisher of barley-sugar mount a regular Sussex buggy, and export himself to some town or village out of the line of our road.

I here made a small effort at ice-breaking with my delicate companion, who consorted with her maid at one end of the room, while I, with one or two more sensualists from the outside, was refreshing myself with some cold fowl and salad. I ventured to ask her whether she would allow me to offer her some wine and water. Hang it, thought I, if we stand upon gentility in a stage coach journey, smart as the things are, we shall never part sociably. She seemed somewhat of the same opinion, for she smiled. I shall never

forget it; it seemed on her placid countenance like sunshine amidst showers—she accepted my proffered draught.

“I rather think,” said I, “we shall travel alone for the rest of the journey—our communicative friends have left us.”

She made no answer; but from the sort of expression which passed over her features, I was very sorry I had made the remark. I was in the greatest possible alarm lest she should require the presence of her maid to play propriety; but no, she had no such notion.

A summons from Mr. Goodman soon put the party in motion, and in a few minutes we were again on our journey—the dear interesting creature and myself *tête à tête*.

“Have you been long at Brighton?” said I.

“Some time,” replied the lady—“some months, indeed.” Here came a pause.

“You reside in London, I presume?” said I.

“In the neighborhood,” replied the lady; at the same time drawing off the glove of her left hand, (which, by the way, was as white as snow,) to smoothe one of her eyebrows, as it appeared by what she actually did with it, but, as I thought, to exhibit to my sight, the golden badge of union which encircled its third finger.

“And,” said I, “have you been living alone at Brighton so long?”

"Oh, no!" said the stranger; "my husband has only left me during the last few weeks, and has now summoned me home, being unable to rejoin me on the coast."

"Happy man!" said I, "to expect such a wife."

Now, there did not seem much in this common place bit of folly, for I meant it for little else than jest, to summon up a thousand feelings, and excite a thousand passions—to raise a storm, and cause a flood of tears. But so it was—my companion held down her head to conceal her grief, and the big drops fell from her beautiful eyes.

"Good God!" said I, "have *I* said anything to induce this emotion?—what have I done?—forgive me—believe me, if I have erred, it has been unintentionally—I—"

"Don't speak to me," said the sufferer—"it is not *your* fault—you are forgiven—my heart is full, very full—and a word that touches the chord which vibrates to its very centre sadly affects me—pray—pray, let go my hand—and believe me I am not angry with you—I am to blame."

"But," said I—not implicitly obeying the injunction about letting go her hand,—because what harm can holding a hand do?—"you must be more explicit before I can be satisfied with forgiveness—you have occasioned an interest which



I cannot control; you have excited feelings which I cannot subdue—I am sure you are unhappy, and that I have referred to something which—”

“Pray, pray ask me nothing,” said my agitated companion; “I have betrayed myself—but I am sure, quite sure,” added she—and I do think I felt a sort of gentle pressure of my hand at the moment —“that you will not take advantage of a weakness of which I ought to be ashamed.”

“You may rely upon me,” said I, “that, so far as you may choose to trust me, you are safe; and you may believe, that any anxiety I may express to know more of circumstances which (whatever they are) so deeply affect you, arises from an interest which you had excited even before you spoke.”

“What would you think of a woman,” said she, “who should open her heart to a stranger? or, what sympathy could sorrows excite, which might be told by her after an hour’s acquaintance? No, no; let me remain unknown to you, as I am. Let us talk on ordinary topics, and let us part friends—but not to meet again.”

Not much in the habit of making conquests, and not being of that particular “shape and make” to be fallen in love with, at first sight, I confess this appeal seemed extraordinary. It was clear, from whatever cause arising I could not

pretend to divine, that I had somehow prepos-  
sessed my companion in my favor; and cer-  
tainly, if anything in the world could have  
induced me to resolve to meet this interesting  
creature again and again, it was her expressed  
desire that such a thing should not occur. I  
wonder if she anticipated the effect of her prohi-  
bition when she announced it!

"Friends!" said I, "why should we not part  
friends? Why should we not live friends? Let  
me implore you, tell me more of yourself—that  
is all I ask."

"Good God!" said she, raising her blue eyes  
towards heaven, "is it possible that my pride  
and spirit should be so broken, so worked upon,  
that I could consent to admit of such a conver-  
sation with a stranger? How strangely do events  
operate upon the human mind!"

"Gentle spirits should be gently treated," said  
I. "I fear some rude hand has broken in upon  
the rest that beings like you should enjoy?"

"Oh," said she, "if I could tell you—and I  
believe I must—to justify myself for conduct  
which must appear to you so wild, so extraor-  
dinary, so unbecoming—oh, why, why did those  
people leave us together?"

I said nothing to this, because I could not ex-  
actly guess why they did; but that they had

done so, I confess, I did not so much regret as my companion *said* she did.

"If my poor mother could look from heaven," said she, "and see me degraded as I am, what would she think of all the love and care expended upon me in my infancy and youth?"

This last touch was rather wounding to my vanity; because, although the lady might consider herself somewhat let down in the world by travelling in a stage coach, I thought it a little uncivil to refer to the circumstance while I was her fellow-passenger.

"If," said I, "you will so far trust me as to confide your sorrows to me, I pledge myself to secrecy, and even to pursue any course which you may suggest for relieving them."

"My story is brief," said my companion; "promise me not to refer to it at any future period during my life—that is, if we should ever meet after to-day, and I *will* trust you."

Here the pressure of the hand was unequivocal; and by a corresponding, yet perhaps more fervent token, I sealed the compact between us.

"I am the daughter," said she, "of a general officer, who with my exemplary mother resided chiefly in Somersetshire. The cares and attention of my parents were affectionately devoted to the education and improvement of their only child, and I became, as they have a thousand

times said, the blessing of their declining years. I was scarcely seventeen when I lost my father, and his death produced not only a change of circumstances in our family, but a change of residence. My mother and myself removed to Bath. There we resided until we were induced to visit the Continent, where—I am ashamed to go on—a nobleman became my avowed admirer, and made me an offer of marriage. His rank was exalted, his fortune large, but I could not love him: was I wrong in refusing to marry him?"

"Assuredly not," said I, amazed at the animation which sparkled in eyes that lately flowed with tears, while she referred to the proper feeling and spirit she had exhibited in refusing a man she could not love.

"That refusal," continued the lady, "my poor mother could not forgive; she never did forgive it, and I believe that her anger is still over me, for what I have since suffered seems like a curse. My mother's disapprobation of my refusal of this desirable match had a complicated origin. She believed, and rightly too, that I discarded her favorite, not only upon the negative feeling of indifference or dislike towards him, but because I secretly preferred another. She was right—"

"And you——"

"Stay," interrupted she—"hear me out—as I have begun, you shall know all. I did love

another, a being all candor, openness, honor and principle; talented, accomplished, gay, full of feeling, and generous to a fault. His name my mother would not hear me mention. She expelled him our house, excluded him from my society. What then?—trick and evasion on my part supplanted obedience and sincerity. The house of a friend afforded opportunities for our meeting, which my own denied—my youthful spirit could not bear restraint—we eloped and were married.”

“And thus you secured your happiness,” said I.

“Happiness!” said my companion; and never shall I forget the expression of bitterness, sorrow, and remorse which animated her countenance as she pronounced the word. “Misery—misery beyond redemption! My mother died two years after my ill-fated union with the man of my choice; and died without forgiving me my sad error. ‘No,’ said my angry parent; ‘she has chosen her course and must follow it, and when I am in my cold grave she will repent, and I hope be forgiven.’”

“But how were your prospects of happiness blighted?” said I.

“Ah!” said my companion, “there is the point—there is the story which I dare not tell. Can I betray my husband? Can I accuse him? Can I commit him to a stranger?”

“Being to a stranger,” said I, “and one who, according to your own commands, is likely to remain a stranger to him always, you surely may.”

“Then hear me,” said the lady: “we had scarcely been married three years when, by some fatality to me wholly unaccountable, he became infatuated by a woman—woman I must call her—who led him into gaieties without his wife; who, fascinated by his agreeable qualities, became the monarch of his affections, the controller of his actions, and who, not satisfied with others attracting him from his home and all its ties, excited in his breast the fiercest jealousy against me.”

“Shocking!” said I; and I thought so as I looked at the bewitching creature; not but that I must confess I did not see the entire impossibility of the existence of causes for her husband’s apprehension, considering the confidential manner in which she communicated all her sorrows to me.

“Treatment the most barbarous followed this,” said my companion; “a disbelief in my assertions, expressed contemptuously, marked all his answers to any request I made to him. The actions and conduct of my life were examined and discussed, until at length he sent me to the coast, to live under the roof of his mother, while he was constantly domesticated with the vile

partner of his gaities and dissipations. Is not this enough to break a heart, or is it not enough to drive a woman to the commission of the very crimes with which she finds herself unjustly charged ?”

Upon this last part of my fair friend's inquiry as to the *lex talionis*, I could have but one opinion to give, and agreed cordially in her view of a case to which, as it appeared to me, she had devoted some considerable portion of her attention.

“ But,” said I, “ you are now returning home ? ”

“ I am,” replied the lady ; “ because the rival I am doomed to bear with is no longer in London, and because the avocations of my husband will not permit him to visit Paris, whither she has gone. He thinks I am ignorant of all this, and thinks that I am a dupe to all his artifices : and why should I undeceive him ? ”

“ This rival,” said I, “ must be a very potent personage, if *you* are unable to break the charm which fascinates your husband, or dispel the influence which she has over him. You *must* have the power, if you have the will to do so.”

“ No,” said she ; “ my power is gone—his heart is lost to me, and is inaccessible by me. Oh ! you little know the treatment I have received from him !—from him whose whole soul was mine, but whose mind is steeled and poisoned

against me!—No human being can tell what I have suffered—what I do suffer!”

It was clear I had now arrived at the conclusion of the story; all that remained was to make the application, or deduce the moral; and, I honestly confess, it appeared to me, that notwithstanding the object of her journey from her mother-in-law's house at Brighton was to rejoin her spouse in London, she would gladly have availed herself of any seasonable opportunity of changing the place of her destination. In fact, I had involved myself more deeply than I anticipated, for, having become a *confidante*, and having volunteered being a cavalier, I apprehended that in a minute or two I should be called forth as a champion, and, like another knight-errant, have the outraged Damosel placed under my especial care.

I confess I was now rather anxious to ascertain who my fair friend was, and what her surname—her Christian name I had discovered to be Fanny. This discovery I made when she was recapitulating, more at length than I have thought it necessary to do, the dialogues between herself and her late respectable mother, in which I observed that, speaking in the maternal character, she called herself by that pretty and simple name, which never was better suited to a human being than herself. The animation and exertion of



talking, and the excitement to which part of her narrative had given rise, together with the effect of the air on a delicate skin, had lighted up her sweet countenance, and I was just on the point of taking a very decisive step in the affair, when the coach suddenly stopped, and the door being opened, a portly lady, with a bandbox, and a bouquet as big as a gooseberry-bush, picked on purpose for her, as she told us, was squeezed by the high-pressure power of Mr. Goodman's right hand into the coach. She was followed by a pale-faced girl of about ten years of age, with a smaller sized bouquet, a basket-full of sweetheart-cakes, and a large phial full of weak red wine and water.

That I was sorry for the interruption I must candidly admit ; but if the new-comers had been quiescent, it would have been more bearable, as I might have had time and leisure to consider what I had heard, and revolve in my mind not only the sad case of the fascinating creature before me, but to decide as to what step I myself should take, when we came to the place of parting.

It is curious to see how soon a feeling of sympathy, or congeniality, or whatever else it may be, renders strangers intimate ; and when that sort of intimacy has begun, how it continues and shows itself by comparison with the conduct observed to the next strangers who appear. I and my fair friend were upon such good terms

with each other, and so distant to the people who had just joined us, that the big lady and the little girl no doubt took us, if not for man and wife, at least for intimates of many years' standing; and then to see, the moment they came in, the care with which my fellow-traveller put her bonnet straight, and pulled her tippet round her, and put her bag in order, just as if she was before company! The contrast was very flattering to me, and so might have been much more of her conversation, but that she maintained it, in a low tone, so as not to be heard by the strangers, forgetting, I conclude, that the pitch of voice which rendered it inaudible to them, left me equally ill-informed.

"Pray, sir," said the big lady, "when does this here coach git to the Olephant and Castle?"

"At a little past eight," said I.

"We goes through Kinnington, I believe," said the lady.

"We do."

"If it is quite agreeable, sir," continued the awful dame, "to your good lady to have that 'ere window up, I should be uncommon oblegated, because my little Emily Lawinia is jist out of the scarlet fever, and I am afeard of her taking could."

The combination of blunders in this little speech set the late weeping Fanny into a laugh ;

for there was in the corner of her eye that playful sparkle which no grief can quite subdue. She was as readily alive to fun as assailable by sorrow; and so it is with all people who feel strongly; for, as Moore says in one of his melodies,

"The heart that is soonest awake to the flowers,  
Is always the first to be touched by the thorns."

The plump lady, however, found that she had made some mistake; and not at all taking into the account that people in general do not very much approve of shutting themselves up in a coach, hermetically sealed, with patients in the scarlet fever, set me and my "good lady" down as two proud, conceited upstarts, and revenged herself, to our utter dismay, by dissipating the sorrows of silence, in enjoying the solace of peppermint lozenges, one of which she herself took, and administered another to her darling pet on the opposite seat; so that while my companion was gratified by the redolence of the fragrant herb through the medium of the old lady, I was indulged by the more active and efficient exertions of the living anatomy next her.

The coach rattled on, and I beheld my opposite neighbor no longer as a stranger. She leaned forward just as we passed Kennington turnpike, and asked me whether I went on to Charing-Cross, or left the coach at the Elephant and

Castle. I told her that I stuck by the ship to the last, and hoped she would permit me to assist her in securing her luggage. It was at this period, in the midst of the jangle of the vehicle and the clatter of the Macadamized road, that I endeavored to induce her to tell me her name. This she positively refused. Then I looked about for the superscription of a letter, which sometimes very inflexible ladies, under similar circumstances, will considerably let slip—and thus, one gets in a moment *accidentally* what worlds would not tempt them deliberately to disclose—but no—it was too dark to read writing; yet, I was so convinced that she actually held a card ready to give me, that I endeavored gently to force her delicate right hand open, in order to obtain the desired information. But, I found I was wrong; she seemed determined either, that I should know nothing more of her, or, if I did, that I should at least have the trouble, or pleasure, as the case might be, of hunting after my intelligence.

Failing in the main point of my inquiries, I endeavored to ascertain what part of London she resided in, and tried every street, square, row and corner, from Grove-road, Paddington, to Dog-row, Whitechapel, in order to excite an affirmative nod, and one of those bewitching smiles which I began to love—but no. Well, thought I, the time must come when you must

go, and then I shall follow ; and so, if you choose to be silent and uncommunicative, and dignified and disagreeable, I can be revenged upon you ; not that I could believe a woman who would generously confide the sorrows of her heart to a man, could be ill-natured enough to withhold the trifling addition of telling him where that heart was doomed to beat.

The moment arrived, and we reached the Elephant and Castle. The sudden check of Goodman's team took my poor Fanny by surprise, and threw her forward, so as to bring her somewhat in contact with myself ; but the lamps of the coach had been lighted at Smithers-bottom, and we were in the dark, compared with objects without ; and never shall I forget the hurried scramble into which she "righted herself," as her eye glanced on a countenance outside the carriage, brightly illuminated by the lamp on that side—she seemed thunder-struck.

"My God !" said she, "here's Charles !"

"Who the devil is Charles ?" said I.

"Hush!—my husband," replied the lady ; "he's coming :—I'm so glad these people are in the coach."

The door opened, and a hand was introduced. "Fanny !" said the master of that hand, in a soft tone of endearment.

"Here I am, love," said my companion.

"Alone!—what—quite full?" said the husband.

"Yes, dear," said the wife; "and so tired. I never was so glad to get out of a coach in my life."

In a moment I thought I recognized the voice of the husband. I coiled myself into the corner. She would have got out without my being betrayed, if she had not dropped her glove.—Why the deuce had she taken it off?—A light was sent for, and the moment it came I beheld, in the object of all my indignation, and the cause of all her sorrow—the oldest friend of my life—Charles Franklin.

"Why," exclaimed he, the moment he recognized me, "is that *you*!—fellow-traveller with my wife, and not known to each other?—this *is* curious!"

"Franklin!" said I, in a sort of tremor.

"Do *you* know my husband, *sir*?" said the lady—"how very strange!"

Yes, thought I, I wish it were impossible.

"I have not seen you for these ten years," said Franklin. "Come home with us—you must and shall—I——"

"Indeed," said I—"I——"

"Oh, come, come," said Franklin; "you can have no engagement—you shall have no engagement to supersede this. I rejoice in having found

you after so long a separation"—and then Mr. Franklin introduced me to his wife in due form, much to the astonishment of our fellow-travellers at the other side of the coach, who concluded, by what they had seen, as indeed they had shown by what they had said, that we were, if actually not man and wife, two of the oldest and most intimate possible friends.

I have a melting heart in the way of a proposition from a friend, especially when it is made under extraordinary circumstances, like those which accompanied and preceded Franklin's; but altogether I sincerely declare, that I never was more embarrassed in my existence. I still wished to see the adventure through, and behold my Niobe in her own domicile. I looked to my charming companion for a telegraphic signal. If she had frowned a negative, I should have repeated the signal, and strenuously declined going; but by the glare of the lamp at the inn door I thought I saw affirmative in the glance of her eye, which induced me to believe that my visit would not annoy her; and so, really, rather than doom her to a *tête à tête* with her tyrant—though he *was* my friend—I consented to put myself in a position as irksome almost as position could be.

We left the coach—my trips from Brighton being periodical and frequent, I had no luggage,

and we proceeded, with the maid and the band-boxes, to my friend's house—of course I shall be excused mentioning the locality—but it was one of the prettiest *bijoux* I ever saw: good taste predominated in every part of its decorations, and I soon discovered, by certain drawings which were pendent on the walls, that my fair companion was an artist, while the pianoforte and harp bespoke her (as she had herself, indeed, informed me she was) accomplished in other sciences.

After a suitable delay of preparation, such as taking off things, and refreshing, and all that, our dinner was served—nothing could be nicer or neater.

"Fanny, dearest," said Franklin, "let me give you this wing; I know, my life, you like it."

"No, Charles, dear, not a bit more, thank you," said Fanny.

"Come, love, a glass of wine with me," said Charles; "'t is an old fashion, but we have been apart some weeks, so our friend will excuse it."

"To be sure he will," said Fanny; and they drank to each other with looks admirably suited to the action.

"How strange it is," said Franklin, "that after so long a separation, we should meet in this extraordinary manner, and that Fanny should not have found you out, or that you should not have discovered her!"



“ Why, my dear Charles,” said Mrs. Franklin, “ strangers do not talk to each other in stage coaches.”

“ Very true, my angel,” said Mr. Franklin ; “ but some accident might have brought your name to *his* ears, or *his* to yours.”

While all this was going on, I sat in a state of perfect amazement. Charles Franklin and I had been schoolfellows, and continued friends to a certain period of life ; he was all that his wife had described him to be, in the earlier part of his life, but I confess I saw none of the heartlessness, the suspicion, the neglect, the violence, the inattention of which she also spoke ; nor did I perceive, in the bright animated look of pleasure which beamed over her intelligent countenance, the slightest remains of the grief and sorrow by which she had been weighed down on the journey.

“ Do you feel tired, my Fanny ? ” said Franklin.

“ No, dear,” replied the lady, “ not very, now ; but those coaches are so small when there are four people in them, that one gets cramped.”

Here I felt a sort of tingling sensation behind my ears, anticipatory of what appeared to me to be a very natural question on the part of Franklin, as to whether we had been full during the whole journey. Mrs. Franklin, however, saw in a moment the false move she had made, and

therefore directed the thoughts of her barbarous husband from the subject, by telling him she had a letter for him from dear mamma—meaning *his* mother, under whose surveillance she had been forcibly immured at Brighton.

About this period Fanny retired, and proceeded to the drawing-room, cautioning us, as she departed, “not to be long.” Charles flew to the door, and opened it for his departing fair—he accompanied her beyond its threshold, and I thought I heard a sound of something very like a kiss, as they parted.

“How strange it is,” said he, resuming his seat and pushing the wine towards me, “that you should have thus accidentally fallen in with Fanny!—she is very pretty; don’t you think so?”

“More than pretty, surely,” said I; “there is an intelligence, an expression, a manner about her, to me quite captivating.”

“If you were present when she is animated,” said her husband, “you would see that playfulness of countenance, or rather, the variety of expression to advantage; her mind lights up her features wonderfully: there is no want of spirit about her, I can assure you.”

“I was quite surprised when I heard of your elopement,” said I.

“Her mother,” said Charles, “an old woman

as proud as Lucifer, was mad after a title for her, and some old broken-down lord had been wheedled, or coaxed, or cajoled, or flattered into making her an offer, which she would not accept ; and then the old lady led her such a life, that she made up her mind to the step which made her mine."

" And ensured your happiness."

" Why yes," said Franklin, " upon my word, taking all things into the scale, I see no cause to repent the step. Between ourselves—of course I speak as an old friend—Fanny has not the very best temper in the world, and of late has taken it into her head to be jealous. An old acquaintance of mine, whom I knew long before I was married, has been over here from France, and I have been a good deal about with her, during her stay ; and as I did not think her quite a person to introduce to Fanny, she took huff at my frequent absence from home, and began to play off a sort of retaliation, as she fancied it, with a young lieutenant of lancers of our acquaintance. I cut that matter very short ; I proposed an excursion to Brighton to visit my mother, to which she acceded, and when I had settled her out of reach of her young hero, and under the eye of *my* mamma, I returned to fulfil my engagements in London. And now that this fair obstacle to her happiness has returned to the continent, I have recalled my better half."

"You seem, however, to understand each other pretty well," said I.

"To be sure," replied Charles, "the only point is to keep her in a good humor, for, *entre nous*, her temper is the very devil—once know how to manage *that*, and all goes well, and I flatter myself I have ascertained the mode of doing that to a nicety."

Whether it was, that Fanny was apprehensive, that under the genial influence of her husband's wine, or upon the score of old friendship, I might let slip some part of the day's adventure, I know not, but we were very early summoned to coffee, and, I confess, I was by no means displeased at the termination of a conversation which every moment I expected would take some turn that would inevitably produce a recurrence to the journey, and, perhaps, eventually, tend to betray the confidence which the oppressed wife had reposed in me.

We repaired to the drawing room.—Fanny was reclining on the sofa, looking as fascinating as ever I saw a lady look.

"Charles, dearest," said she, "I thought you would never come up; you and your friend must have had something very interesting to talk about to detain you so long."

"We didn't think it long, Fan," said Charles,

“because we really were talking on a very interesting subject—we were discussing *you*.”

“Oh, my dear Charles!” exclaimed the lady, “you flatter me; and what did he say of me?” said she, addressing me.

“That,” said I, “I cannot tell you: I never betray anything that is told me in confidence.”

Her looks explained that she was particularly glad to hear me say so, and the smile which followed was gracious in the extreme.

“Now,” said Charles, “that you have thus strangely found your way here, I hope we shall see you often.”

“And I hope so, too,” said Mrs. Franklin; “I really believe sometimes that things which we blind mortals call chance are preordained. I was not coming by the coach in which I met you, nor should I have been in it, if the other coach had not been full, and then——”

“I should have lost the pleasure,” said I, “of seeing an old friend enjoying the delights of domestic happiness.”

Here Fanny gave me a look expressive of the perfect misery of her condition; and Charles, whose back was turned towards us at the instant, in coming up the room again, while *her* back was turned to *him*, made a sort of face, something between the sorrowful and the grotesque, which I shall never forget, but which indicated, most

unequivocally, what his feelings on the subject were.

Shortly after this the happy pair began to be so excessively kind and tender to each other that I thought it was quite time to beat a retreat, and accordingly took my leave, earnestly pressed by both parties to repeat my visit as often as I could, and to let them see as much of me as possible. I returned them my warmest thanks for their kindness, but named no day for my return, and wished them good night.

I have not been there since. I called, indeed, once, and Charles called on me, but I have been little in London during the last season, and they have been much in the country. I could not have equitably maintained an intimacy with them, for I felt neutrality would be quite out of the question; thus, although the recurrence of my old friendship with Charles Franklin has been productive of no very satisfactory results as relate to ourselves personally, it has given me an additional light in my path through the world, and now, whenever I see a picture of perfect happiness presented to my eyes, affection on one side and devotion on the other, assiduity met by kindness, and solicitude repaid with smiles, instead of feeling my heart glow with rapture at the beautiful scene before me, I instantly recollect that I once travelled to London in the BRIGHTON COACH.

## THE CAPUCIN.

BY MRS. ROMER.

"What is he whose grief bears such an emphasis?"

HAMLET.

RELIGIOUS processions, which had been altogether suppressed in France at the first revolution, and had been reëstablished at the restoration of the Bourbons, have again nearly disappeared. The Corpus Domini, or Fête Dieu, which was observed with such pomp and splendor in Paris during the reigns of Louis the Eighteenth and Charles the Tenth, and which the royal family attended in the most unbounded spirit of devotion, is never now heard of in the capital, and if at all observed in France, it is only in some of the remote southern provinces, where the priesthood still hold considerable sway over the minds and hearts of the people.

Not so in Italy. Never for a moment has the poetry of religion lost its empire over the imaginations of the Italians; and even where its sacred precepts do not reach the heart or influence the actions, its outward ceremonies are

scrupulously observed. Thus the most reckless and rapacious bandit will prostrate himself at the sound of the Angelus, and with sanctified fervor kneel down should a procession bearing the *viaticum* to some departing spirit cross his path, even though that path is leading him to plunder and violence—the hand with which he had crossed himself with pious devotion would in the next moment, without scruple, resume its merciless hold of the assassin's dagger.

On my way from Rome to Venice, in the year 18—, I arrived at Ravenna on the day of the Fête Dieu, and although my only motive for halting there had been to visit Dante's tomb, and the "haunted wood," which was the theatre of Dryden's spectral hunt, I was induced to join the throng in the streets in order to witness the *funzione*, which is there enacted with a magnificence that characterizes all sacred ceremonies throughout the papal dominions. Military pomp lends its aid to heighten the effect of religious enthusiasm; the streets are lined with troops, and as the procession passes through them, the soldiers kneel down and present arms. It must be owned that the soldiers of the pope are not remarkable for their military appearance; but at the period to which I allude, the legations were occupied by Austrian troops, and the martial aspect of the Hungarian grenadiers, who look as



if they had come into the world ready drilled and accoutred, made up for the deficiencies of his holiness' armed force. The cardinal legate, the archbishop of Ravenna, and innumerable *monsignori*, *prelati*, and ecclesiastics of all grades, walked bareheaded in the procession, which, commencing at the domo or cathedral, wound through all the principal streets, and after about three hours' circuit, again returned to the metropolitan church, having in its passage made pauses at the various *reposoirs*, or temporary altars, which had been set up in prominent parts of the different parishes, in order to receive the homage of the parochial clergy, who there joined the procession, and proceeded with it to the cathedral.

I had taken up my position under the portico of one of those vast palaces with which Ravenna abounds, and whose splendors recall its ancient importance, and contrast so forcibly with its present decayed and deserted appearance.

The spot where I stood was immediately opposite to one of the altars, where a temporary halt was made, so that I was enabled to see the ceremony in all its details, and to notice the remarkable individuals and various confraternities of which it was composed. Amongst the almost interminable line of mendicant friars, who walked two and two, their arms crossed and their heads sunk upon their bosom, my attention was sud-

denly arrested by one among them, who, although wearing the coarse brown habit of his order, the sandals and the simple cord for a girdle, differed as completely from the rest of his brethren in air and appearance, as though he had been dressed in the garb of fashion. Unlike the slouching figures and unwashed faces among which he mingled, his form was tall and erect, his countenance of a noble and delicate caste of beauty, and his hands of that aristocratical form and color, which are one of the few unerring evidences of gentle blood. In short, there was a distinction in his whole person and air in strange discordance with the Capucin habit worn by him—a habit which is invariably the badge of all that is most squalid and unclean, and (if such an expression may be applied) most plebeian among religious confraternities.

The palace under the portico of which I had placed myself, differed from every other mansion in that street, inasmuch as that its windows were closed, and that none of those gawdy draperies, which on similar occasions are usually displayed even in the humblest habitations, were suspended from its deserted balconies. When the young Capucin paused before the altar opposite to it, he cast a furtive glance towards the desolate pile, and the livid hue that suddenly overspread his countenance betrayed the fierce internal emotion

which its aspect had called forth. At the same moment a voice, proceeding from behind me, struck me by the melancholy interest with which it pronounced the words, "Povero Damaso!" and on turning round I observed that the speaker's eyes were fixed upon the young friar who had so forcibly arrested my own attention. Addressing a lady who was leaning on his arm, he continued—"Alas! what a melancholy contrast does his situation now exhibit to that in which we beheld him last year at this ceremony, when, in all the pride of youth and birth and station, he stood in that balcony by the side of the object of his love, in the security of privileged and requited affection! Who could have foreseen before a year expired he would have exchanged the palace of his noble ancestors for a Capucin's cell?"

I felt so convinced that the foregoing words referred to the identical person upon whom my own attention was fixed, that I could not repress an impulse of curiosity, which induced me to inquire of the young man who had uttered them, whether the melancholy-looking Capucin was the subject of his observations, and whether his having assumed the monastic habit was the result of any misfortune.

He replied that my conjectures were right, and that the history of the Capucin involved a calam-

ity that was known to all Ravenna, but which could possess but little interest for those who were strangers to the persons most painfully connected with it.

"I think you said his name was Damaso?" I observed, in the hope that I might imperceptibly lead him on to a recital which had considerably stimulated my curiosity.

"Yes, the Marquis Damaso P——, one of the noblest and richest individuals in Ravenna, now Fra Damaso, of the poorest order of mendicant friars."

"What could have determined so extraordinary a vocation?" I inquired.

"Love and jealousy," he answered. "Have you noticed the palace before which we are standing, with its closed windows and deserted balconies? It is the paternal mansion of the Contessina Olimpia M——, one of the most charming persons in Ravenna, beautiful enough to be remarked wherever she went, and yet gentle and unpretending, as though unconscious of her superiority over all others. Often have I paused to observe her standing in that balcony, in the midst of the flowers that filled it, herself the fairest flower of all; and but a few days before the catastrophe, which I am about to relate, I saw her there with the Marquis Damaso, then the gayest of the gay, the happiest of

the happy, for he was at the summit of his hopes and wishes, he was the betrothed lover of the beautiful Contessina Olimpia.

“Damaso’s love was like that of a madman, for although certain of his passion being returned, he was jealous of all who looked upon Olimpia, and would even have wished that every one but himself could have been blind to her perfections. He feared a rival in every casual acquaintance that approached her, and his distrust occasionally assumed so violent a character that Count M——, fearing that his daughter’s happiness would be compromised by this infirmity of disposition, hesitated to give his consent to the marriage. The young lady herself, however, only laughed at the jealous fancies of her lover, and, instead of being offended by them, looked upon them as evidences of his all-engrossing passion, nor appeared to apprehend that the susceptibility which was to a certain degree gratifying in the lover, would become intolerable in the husband.

“It appears that Damaso having one day absented himself from Ravenna to go to a villa at some leagues distance, returned late in the evening, but not too late to repair to the palazzo M——. As he approached it from the opposite street, he beheld his betrothed advance to the window, pluck one of the roses that clustered around it, and after gazing forth for a moment,

retreat. Quickening his steps, he reached the window she had just left, and saw her seated on the sofa of her boudoir, while a young man, who occupied a place by her side, familiarly held both her hands clasped in one of his, while the other held the flower she had so lately gathered.

“At this sight Damaso stood transfixed to the spot, as though he had been changed into a statue of stone, his eyes fascinated towards the fatal window. The young lady rose, spoke with great animation for a few moments to the young man, then embraced him tenderly, and disappeared. In a few seconds the lamps of the boudoir were extinguished, and almost in the same instant Damaso saw the young man, who had been the companion of Olimpia, and the object of her endearments, issue from the gate of the palazzo, pass before him, and turn round the corner into the next street. The Marquis Damaso, who had hitherto been paralyzed by emotion, suddenly recovered his powers of volition, and rushing, like a maniac, after the unknown, he speedily overtook him.

“‘Stop!’ he cried, grasping him by the collar.

“The young man immediately paused.

“‘Wretch!’ continued Damaso, ‘defend yourself!’ and carried away by the vehemence of his passion he shook him violently.

“The youth, astonished at this unforeseen

attack, started back, and drawing from his bosom a knife which he carried there, called upon Damaso to unhand him, or that he would not be answerable for the consequences. But Damaso's only answer was a renewed attack, in which he contrived to make himself master of the weapon, and in the struggle that ensued for its recovery, its ill-fated owner received a wound which stretched him lifeless at the feet of Damaso.

"The murderer, suddenly recalled to his senses by the fatal termination of the affray, stooped down, and laying his hand upon the heart of his victim, ascertained that its pulsations had ceased forever; but at that moment the sound of approaching footsteps warned him to think of his own safety, and hastily rising he fled from the scene.

"Scarcely had he proceeded two hundred paces ere he began to reflect coolly upon all that had happened. He did not regret the deed, for it was a rival—a beloved rival—whom he had destroyed; but he felt assured that on the morrow all Ravenna would be ringing with the event, and he felt the necessity of averting suspicion from himself. As it was known that he had left the city early in the morning to proceed to his country-house, he repaired immediately to his palace, and desiring his servant who admitted him not to mention to any person his momentary

return to Ravenna, he caused his fleetest horse to be saddled, and immediately retraced his steps to the Villa, where he remained three days, which, to his disturbed and anxious mind, appeared three mortal ages.

“When the Marquis Damaso felt that he was sufficiently master of himself to allow no traces to appear in his countenance of that which was passing within his mind, he ventured to Ravenna, and determined, notwithstanding the terrible emotion that must assail him, to go to the house of Count M——, as though nothing had happened. It was a trial which required all his courage to encounter, for how could he find himself in the presence of Olimpia without betraying the indignation with which her supposed perfidy had filled him? He nerved himself for the meeting, however, and repaired to the Palazzo M——.

“Damaso found the whole household in consternation, tears were in every eye, grief imprinted upon every countenance, but he was too much absorbed in his own emotions to inquire the reason; and hurrying up the staircase, entered the private apartment of the Count. There he found the father and daughter seated together, clad in the deepest mourning; an expression of profound sorrow had overcast their countenances, and traces of tears were still wet upon their cheeks. Damaso stopped upon the threshold,



unnerved by the picture of woe that met his eyes, and a dreadful presentiment caused the blood to freeze in his veins. The mourners were too deeply absorbed in their grief to be aware of his approach, and for the moment he dared neither to advance nor to speak, such was the mysterious dread that assailed him; at last, unable to endure a further suspense, he uttered in trembling accents—‘In the name of Heaven what has happened?’

“At the sound of his voice, Olimpia, without changing her position, burst into an agony of tears. The Count alone raised his head, and, in a voice broken by emotion, said—‘Damaso, the ways of God are inscrutable, but most cruel sometimes, and hard to bear.’

“Damaso scarcely breathed, while the old gentleman, beckoning him to seat himself by his side, continued—‘You are aware, my dear friend, that I have been separated from my son for the last four years; I have too often spoken to you of the unhappy difference of opinion that existed between us, and which had induced him to leave home and become a traveller in foreign countries. My poor son! suddenly, and without having apprized us, he arrived here three days ago—the very day on which you went into the country; weary of living amongst strangers, he came to seek a reconciliation with me, and

to fix himself once more in his native city, and that very night, as he left my house, he was murdered in the street! My son, my dear son, fell by the hand of an unknown assassin!' and the unfortunate father, overcome by the dreadful words he had uttered, hid his face in his hands and sobbed aloud.

"You can, perhaps, imagine what passed in the head and heart of Damaso after this revelation had been made to him, but words would be inadequate to express the desolation and despair that assailed him, for, notwithstanding the violence of his character, he possessed a noble and generous soul.

" 'Your son,' he exclaimed, 'your son—murdered—three days ago. Oh God! oh God!' and, with hands wildly clasped together, he sank to the ground upon his knees.

"The count stretched out his hand to him, for, little suspecting the part which Damaso had taken in the dreadful tragedy, he felt grateful to him for the sympathy he evinced in his sorrow. But the unhappy Damaso dared not touch the hand that was tendered to him; and rising, without venturing to turn his eyes towards Olimpia or her father, he rushed from the room, nor stopped until he reached his own dwelling, where he shut himself up and forbade any of his household to approach him.

**“ The next day Count M—— received a letter containing these words :**

**“ ‘ We have met for the last time, nor will this announcement astonish you when you hear that my fatal jealousy has caused all your anguish and all your despair ; that I, the guilty and mistaken Damaso, am the murderer of your son. Death, which ends all sufferings, would be too great a boon for so very a wretch as I have become. I shall live to expiate in tears and remorse the crime into which I was hurried by my blind, ungovernable passions. May God pity and pardon the wretched Damaso P——.’**

**“ On the same day he entered a convent of mendicant friars, and, during the year of his noviciate, which has just expired, he has never been seen beyond its walls. Some of his friends have endeavored to obtain an interview with him, but without success ; his days are spent in the most rigid observances of his religious duties, and his nights in acts of the severest penance.**

**“ This is the first time he has been seen since the horrible event which has caused his seclusion from the world, and so much is he changed by all that he has suffered, that I had at first some difficulty in recognizing him.”**

**“ And Count M——,” I inquired, “ and the Contessina Olimpia ? ”**

**“ They quitted Ravenna at the period of the fatal discovery, and have never since returned home.”**

## THE COUNTRY TAVERN.

BY JAMES T. FIELDS.

"Those who know the road, leave behind them a showy, porticoed tavern, new, and carefully divested of all trees and grass, and pull up at the door of the old inn at the place, a low, old-fashioned house, built on a brook-side, and with all the appearance of a comfortable farm-house, save only a leaning and antiquated sign-post."—[*Letters from under a Bridge.*]

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It is a rare thing, in a hot summer evening, to alight before such a country tavern as Willis has described in his admirable "Letters." Yet New England especially abounds in these rural resting places, and many a quiet nook may be discovered with little trouble, not a half day's ride from Boston. We have just at this moment in our mind's eye a delicious tumble-down old house in Berwick, "away down east," so cool and refreshing that the most weary traveller cannot fail to recruit his tired limbs inside its honest old walls. We well remember the hot, dusty day which first made us acquainted with this hospitable mansion. We had ridden many a weary mile, and just at sun-down came upon a quaint, old-fashioned building, with nothing exterior to recommend it but the bubbling brook which ran gaily

along at its side. The door stood wide open, and a huge flag-bottomed chair invited the passer-by to seat himself. Shall we ever forget that trout and those berries, the good-humored face of the landlady, the merry, twinkling eyes of the good man himself, or the low, sanded back room where all these were gathered together? Let us not forget the cream of that occasion neither, nor the sweet voice of the damsel who brought it, fresh as her own blooming cheeks. It is many a year since that sunny afternoon has been numbered with the days that are past, but we can still hear the waving of the elm trees that shaded that little room, and the sound of the running streamlet is often busy as we sit musing in the twilight of a summer evening. We know not if this humble dwelling is still in existence. Perhaps it has given place to a more modern edifice, rich in white paint and stylish waiters. But here is the tavern as we saw it; the same thatched roof and low door-way; the identical railing in front, over which we leaned, watching the nimble insects as they darted in and out among the bending rushes. On that crazy fence we sat enjoying the night breeze as it swept thither from the hills around, and the whole scene is as vivid this very hour as when we cut our name on the old apple-tree in the valley, and caught our first trout in the brook at the bottom of the orchard.

# **THE DEAD WATCH.**

## **A LEGEND OF FRANKFORT.**

**BY ELIZABETH YOUATT.**

**"No more — no more — no more !  
The hour of dream is o'er,  
And troubles of the world bloom out anew ;  
But youth — and sunny day —  
And beauty — where are they ?  
The earth has lost its green, — the sky its blue !"**  
**BARRY CORNWALL.**

It was late one summer evening when an English family arrived at Frankfort, and took up their abode at the principal hotel. It consisted of a father and two daughters, accompanied by the betrothed of the eldest,—one Frank Kennedy, whose merry voice and laughing eyes won golden opinions from both high and low. Altogether they seemed a very happy group, and had certainly everything to make them so. Mr. Allen was a rich city merchant, well to do in the world, as the phrase is, and proud only that he had been founder of his own fortunes ; and his daughters handsome, well educated girls, with spirits untouched by care, and all the hopefulness

of an untroubled youth fresh about them. There was nothing romantic in the history of the lovers ; they had met first at a ball, where Mr. Kennedy was struck with Gertrude's beauty, and she amused by his lively remarks and somewhat proud of attentions which others envied. It was a bright evening, nevertheless, and such a one as haunts us for years afterwards like a dream,—but theirs was realized. Frank asked leave to call the following day, when he found the idol of the ball-room was likewise the presiding spirit of her cheerful home. He marked how proud her father was, and how her young sister loved her, and after a time it seemed but natural that he should love her too, with all his heart and soul, and that Gertrude, when he told her so, should believe him with the ready faith of woman.

Frank Kennedy already knew something of mercantile pursuits, and with a desire, probably, of pleasing his intended father-in-law, professed a wish to learn more, offering to place, as an earnest of his sincerity, one half of his princely fortune in the concern, on which account they had found it necessary to visit Frankfort, where the greater part of Mr. Allen's connection lay, who was far too indulgent a parent to refuse his daughters such an opportunity of seeing something of a country which they might never visit again ; and it was agreed that the marriage

should be celebrated immediately on their return, in the presence of the mutual friends of both parties.

Most of the principal families to whom they had introductions, received our travellers with the true German spirit of hospitality, and they were everywhere *fêted* and caressed to their hearts' content; but the lovers, as was only natural, infinitely preferred a quiet walk in the suburbs of the city; on which occasions the younger sister Margaret, merely, as she assured Gertrude, to avoid making a third, was wont to accept the escort of a certain young German doctor, with an unpronounceable name, and a pair of exquisite mustaches, whom she had overheard one night at a party, or her imperfect knowledge of the language deceived her, express his astonishment at Mr. Kennedy's want of taste in preferring the elder to the younger sister. However this might be, the lovers were well content with the arrangement, and they visited in this manner most of the principal lions of Frankfort.

Our travellers were much struck with the singular contrast presented by the mingling of the old and new town, the narrow streets and quaint wooden buildings of the former appearing half lost, as it were, beneath the shadow of mighty domes and palaces everywhere springing up. A fresh creation destined, in the course of a few



years, to sweep away all traces of the past. They likewise visited the Römerburg, and Cathedral ; stood spell-bound before the house in which that immortal poet was born who dreamed of "Faust," and which is still pointed out in the Hirsch-graben, distinguished only by his father's coat of arms yet remaining over the door, bearing, by a curious coincidence, the poetical device of three lyres.

"You know Goethe, then?" whispered the German doctor, as he gazed upon Margaret's eloquent face. He meant his poems, for the poet himself had been dead many years.

"I have seen translations of him," replied the girl, timidly.

"Ah ! we tried to translate Shakspeare ; since then I have read his works in English. To know Goethe one must learn German."

Margaret, all enthusiasm, was quite anxious to do so ; and under cover of that illustrious name, they walked, talked, studied, and even wrote to each other, exercises of course, which had to be corrected and returned with due punctuality. So much for their visit to the Hirsch-graben.

"Shall you want Frank to-day, papa?" asked Gertrude, one bright morning.

"No, no, my children ; amuse yourselves after your own fashion." And the old man looked

round on their happy faces with a pleased smile, and wished it might always be so.

Their rambles that day were, if possible, pleasanter even than usual; the air seemed so soft and sunny, the heavens so blue, and the grass, where they did get a peep of it, so green, just as it always does to the young e'er the shadow of their own saddened spirit passes forever over earth and sky: when we mourn for the departed glories of our youth, for the change that has come upon all living things since then. Alas! it is ourselves only who alter.

As is the custom in most German towns, the door leading to one of the principal cemeteries stood invitingly open, and our party in careless and merry mood, strolled laughingly in; but their merriment was presently hushed by the sweet solemnity of the scene and hour. There was nothing striking in the somewhat primitive aspect of the place. No costly monument usurping room which could be ill spared, and keeping up the distinction of rank and power even in death. No picturesque mounds, and flower-covered bases, such as we meet with in sunny France. Here and there, indeed, was a small bouquet of flowers not yet withered, or a basin of holy water standing beside a green hillock, the grass upon which was worn away in many places, where the mourner had knelt and wept in vain

agony for the unforgotten! Or a sword or helmet marking out the soldier's grave. Everywhere might be seen crosses, gravestones, and mounds of earth, crowding thickly together, the dead leaving little space for the living. While here and there the desolate appearance of the place was relieved by a few ancient-looking trees, which bent down their hoary heads, and seemed whispering among themselves, wondering perhaps whose turn would come next, for Karl Holzenhäuser told our travellers that, one by one, as room was wanted, they were hewn down and burned.

Gertrude sat down beside a raised mound, the chaplet of flowers upon which was as though but newly wreathed, and wondered whether its inmate had died young, or had loved? and if so, knowing no more, could have pitied that inmate from her very heart.

The German sighed.

"Ah!" said he, "it was here that I heard those very words before, and from one almost as fair. A twelvemonth afterwards and she envied, but had ceased to pity, the early taken."

Gertrude shuddered as though she listened to a prophecy.

"She of whom I speak," continued the doctor, replacing Margaret's arm, which she had with-

drawn, she knew not why, gently within his,  
“ was my sister.”

“ And wherefore had life become wearisome in  
so short a time ? ” asked Frank Kennedy.

“ Because he she loved was dead ! ”

“ Gertrude, you are ill ! ” exclaimed her watch-  
ful sister.

“ No, no, it is past now. But it feels cold sit-  
ting here.”

Frank laughed, and declared his belief that she  
was afraid of the spirits which are said to haunt  
such spots ; while the girl, in answer to his jests,  
confessed, in a low voice that, although she may  
have been somewhat of a coward in that respect  
once, since she had known him she had but one  
fear ; and then she whispered it with tearful eyes,  
while Frank bent down and kissed them, sooth-  
ing her with kind and gentle words. Margaret  
and the doctor, as in duty bound, walking slowly  
on, although the former looked a little shy, and  
the latter very much as if he should like to follow  
the example of the young Englishman, in some  
things at least.

At one end of the enclosure, as is the case in  
most German burial grounds, the literal and  
beautiful translation of which is “ Court of Peace,”  
or, “ God’s Acre,” was a cloister set apart for  
the more sumptuous monuments of the rich and  
noble ; in the dim shadow of the entrance to

which stood an old man, his long thin hair, and sharp withered face, bleached by time and age almost to the same white hue. His very clothes were of a similar undefined greyish color, and Margaret took him at first for a statue, and even touched him with her hand, while he smiled dreamily, as she started back trembling and laughing to the side of her sister.

"Poor man!" said Gertrude; "speak to him, Frank."

Her companion obeyed her, asking who he was, and what he did alone in so solitary a spot?

"We watch the dead!" was the reply.

"Oh! no fear of their running away, I should think, father."

"But they may wake up!"

Frank thought the old man mad, until Karl Holzenhäuser explained to them that, communicating with the cloister was a building where the bodies of the dead are placed, in conformity with a police regulation adopted in most German towns, within twelve hours after death; the only distinction between the rich and the poor being, that the former repose in an apartment better fitted up, hung with black, and lighted by a dismal lamp. In this gloomy chamber the dead bodies, deposited in their coffins, await the time appointed for interment. A peculiar precaution being adopted to guard against the accident of

burial in cases of suspended animation. The fingers of the prostrate corpse are placed in loops of strings, or bell-ropes, attached to an alarm-bell, which is fixed in the apartment of an attendant appointed to be on the watch; the slightest pulsation of the body would be thus sufficient to give the alarm, and medical aid is always at hand.

"It is Peter Hoffmann's duty to keep the night watch," added the doctor, "and during the day he visits his family, or wanders about whither he pleases, but generally, as by a spell, in the same place which has known him for the last thirty years."

"And has life ever been saved in this way?" asked Frank.

"Certainly; we have several well authenticated cases on record, although I must confess that it still oftener happens otherwise, and medical aid is vain; as though the yearning spirit had but returned, as it were, to take a last glimpse of the world where it had been so happy."

"How solitary it must be," said Gertrude, kindly, to the old man, "to sit in the still night all alone, listening for the summons of the departed struggling back again to life!"

"It never seems so to me, lady."

"But how do you keep yourself awake?"

"By sleeping in the day time."

"And you have heard the bell many times, they tell me, during the years you have kept watch?"

"Aye, often and often, when no one else did, and I have been miles and miles away in far country places; or as I lay dreaming in the broad sunlight. And sometimes it has rung in reality. None who once hear that bell can ever forget it again."

Gertrude dropped some money into his hand, and they passed on, for it was growing late, while an exulting smile flitted over the old man's white face, as he likewise moved rapidly away in an opposite direction.

"He is gone now to buy something for little Pauline," said the doctor to Margaret.

"And who is Pauline?"

"His grandchild, a beautiful coquettish little thing on whom he lavishes all he receives. They do say she will be quite an heiress, for Hoffmann is far from poor, and being instrumental in the way in which I have been describing, in restoring the temporarily extinguished life of the eldest son of the Baron Von F——, is the possessor of many costly trinkets which the little maiden displays with great glee. It is strange to see the perfect love which subsists between these two—the old man and the child—the last of their race! They remind me of the rock and

the flower, or a girl and her shadow, that dark, shapeless thing which moves and frolics only at her bidding, and although at times unseen, is ever near her and about her with a watchful love."

"Gertrude," said Frank Kennedy, abruptly, and his merry voice breaking in upon the dreamy accents of the German, sounded harsh and out of place,—"when I die I hope it may be at Frankfort, for, from a boy, I had always a horror of being buried alive. Not that I should like to trust to the wakefulness of that half-witted old man. What say you, dearest, will you keep vigil for me?"

"Frank," began the girl, and then her voice failed her, and she turned away and wept.

"Nay, this is weakness, my Gertrude!"

"I confess it, but do not chide me for I am not quite well to-day." And the girl seemed glad to have found an excuse for her silence and her tears, which would flow; or for Frank's soothing whispers and fond caresses; while Karl Holzenhäuser wondered, with something of indignation, whether all Englishmen took the same selfish pleasure in wounding, in order to demonstrate the affection of the beloved one.

That night the dark passionate eyes and the eloquent voice of the German doctor haunted Margaret strangely, while her sister, less happy



in her troubled sleep, dreamed of that ancient man who watched the dead.

Time passed on, and the day was already fixed for their return, while Frank and Gertrude thought less of Germany, and more of the happy English home to which they were going back, laying a thousand bright plans for the future, destined never to be realized. Alas ! that it should be ever thus with our most cherished imaginings ! When together, the sisters spoke of little besides bridal silks and laces, although the elder, had she been less preoccupied, might have noticed that Margaret often answered vaguely, and with tear-suffused eyes, as if her thoughts were otherwise engaged, and evidently showed but little impatience to return to her native land. During the last few days of their stay, Karl Holzenhäuser was almost constantly with them, while Margaret would sit for hours after his departure without speaking, bending over a book which he had given her — her tears falling like rain upon its pages. But no wonder, for who but a stoic could read Goethe's "Iphigenia," his "Maid of Orleans," or "Torquato Tasso," with dry eyes.

The departure of our travellers was, however, most unavoidably postponed by the sudden illness of Frank Kennedy. At first no danger was apprehended, and preparations for their journey still went on ; until the disease presently took a less

favorable turn, and desolation fell, like a cloud, upon that band of hopeful and happy hearts. The young and joyous, stricken down in the pride of his glorious manhood and unbroken spirit—the loving, the beloved! The bridegroom, for whose return they waited in his native land in vain. It seemed hard to think that he must pass away thus, but harder still for those he left behind.

In that hour of grief and separation, Karl Holzenhäuser bitterly reproached himself for having once deemed the young Englishman selfish, when he saw him smiling amidst fierce pain to still the wilder agony of her who never left him for a moment; or whispering gently of a better land, where there were no partings and no tears. Asking her, in his passionate and self-sacrificing love, not to remember, but forget him and be happy! Poor Gertrude! it was sad to see her going from one to the other, with her pale face, and dark earnest eyes, exclaiming—

“Father! Margaret! he will not die?”

To which the former dared not reply, while the latter, with the hopeful spirit of youth, would answer, gently—

“Heaven is merciful, my sister, let us pray that he may be spared to our love.” And if prayers could have saved him, Frank Kennedy had not perished.

It was a glorious summer noon, when the voices of alternate hope, and joy, and lamentation, were suddenly hushed in the quiet chamber of death. And the bright sun, the only thing that smiled, shut out so closely that but one long streak of light managed to find its way amidst the darkness, and settle like a glory upon the still brow of the corpse; while the crowd who watched beneath with a strange sympathy for the young lovers, knew by the closed windows that all was over, and went home to weep and pray. The sisters, pale and trembling, sat, clasped in each other's arms, in the dim twilight of their once joyous saloon; while the merchant, half bewildered by this sudden stroke, dared to question Providence itself why it should be thus. The green tree cut down in its pride and strength, while the old and withered trunk, which might have been scarcely missed, was still left to cumber the ground. And ere the next noon all was in outward appearance as though Frank Kennedy had never been.

Gertrude seemed calmer, although fearfully pale, and withdrawing to her own apartment, requested that no one would come near her any more that night, not even her young sister, who, well knowing how much need she had to be alone, promised to take care that she was not disturbed. And shortly afterwards a slight figure,

shrouded in a cloak, might have been seen gliding from the house in the direction of the cemetery where the remains of the young Englishman had been so recently deposited. On it went like a dream, through the open door, and across the dreary grave-yard to the cloister, from whence it passed, as with a familiar step, although for the first time, to the apartment of Peter Hoffmann.

The old man sat quite alone, with his head bowed down and resting upon his singularly withered hands, so that the intruder might have thought he slept, but for the uneasy swaying motion of his whole body, or an occasional sob which burst forth in all the wildness of a long smothered grief; while his visitor knelt down by his side, and suffering the dark folds of her mantle to fall upon the ground, disclosed to view the colorless and grief-stricken features of Gertrude Allen. Hoffmann looked up vacantly at the sound of her kind voice.

"Ah!" said he, "you may well weep, but she will be better soon. She is too young, too beautiful to die!"

The girl shuddered, and asked of whom he spoke.

"Have you not heard, then? *She* is ill—the little, merry, laughter-loving Pauline! But Heaven will spare her, she is so good—and but a child yet."

"I trust so, since you love her thus," said Gertrude, soothingly.

"Love her—oh! yes, yes, she knows I love her—and Heaven knows it, and will have mercy upon us both!"

"But why are you not with her now?" asked the girl, "if she is indeed so ill." While the old man, glancing upwards to the bell which hung immediately above his head, answered as when they had first met,

*"We watch the dead!"*

"Go," said Gertrude, "nevertheless, and I will take your place for to-night."

"Poor little Pauline!" murmured the old man, "how surprised she would be to see me. But you know not what you ask, lady. It takes a long time to get accustomed to this sort of thing, and you might be frightened at the strange noises sometimes heard here at night—or fall asleep, perhaps."

"Peter Hoffmann!" exclaimed Gertrude, bending towards him, and flinging back the hair from her white face, "we have met before, do you not remember me?"

"Yes, now, that I see you closer. You gave me money, and little Pauline danced round me that night like a fairy, when she saw the cakes and bonbons I bought for her with it, but would not touch one unless grandpapa eat them too."

**"But I was not alone then."**

**"No, I recollect all now—the gentle-eyed girl whom you called your sister; and the young Englishman with his bright face and joyous glance, who never left you for a moment; and yet did not seem quite like a brother either."**

**"He was my betrothed husband," said the girl, in a voice that sounded strangely calm; "and now sleeps beneath us in the chamber of the dead!"**

**"Poor child!" exclaimed her companion, with a compassionate air.**

**"Do you now fear that I shall sleep upon the watch?" asked Gertrude.**

**"No, no, God bless and pity you! I will not be gone long, only to look upon her face, and see her start and smile at the sound of my voice. I will be back before midnight."**

**"It matters not," said the girl, "I have a bold heart; remain with little Pauline as long as you will."**

**"If you should hear a rustling and groaning as night comes on," observed the old man, "it will only be the birds above in the roof, or the wind in the old chimney. And you must stir but for one sound, in which case a life may hang upon your speed."**

*"His life,"* repeated Gertrude, firmly, "fear not!"

The old man went out, closing the door after him, and presently afterwards the outer gate was heard to fasten with a harsh, grating sound, and the girl was alone, with the dead beneath and all around her. As yet it was scarcely dusk, but night grew gradually in; and as Gertrude crossed the room to fasten the little casement, her footstep sounded strangely heavy and distinct in the silence. She found the lamp where Hoffmann had told her; a dim, flickering thing which served but to make darkness visible; and near it the old man's Bible, upon which rested a withered bouquet of wild flowers, the child's last offering ere she was stricken down by disease. Meet emblems of earthly and heavenly affection, the one passing away so soon, the other imperishable—immortal!

As Peter Hoffmann had said, there were strange sounds to be heard in that desolate apartment. The sighing of the wind, the whispering of the trees, which had ever something new to tell each other; or the rustling and screaming of the birds above her head. But Gertrude had no fear; her thoughts had wandered far away, and even as it were but yesterday, she saw a bright face bending down to hers, and a never to be forgotten voice asking her to keep vigil for

him, lest he should wake again! And then, breaking in upon her vision, came the faint tinkling of a bell, and yet when she looked up all was still; and the girl called to mind how Hoffmann had heard it in far-off country places, in his sleep, or as he sat musing in the glad sunlight, and thought that she too had but dreamt it.

The flickering shadow of the lamp, swayed to and fro by the wind, danced mockingly upon the discolored walls and ceiling—and yet surely it was not the only thing that moved. The wire!—did it not likewise vibrate? The bell—there was no sound, but its iron tongue swang visibly backwards and forwards. Gertrude pressed her hand to her throbbing temples—she looked again, and again came that voiceless summons. And then, bending down her head, she prayed heaven she might not be going mad. Suddenly, as she knelt, there arose up the clear ringing of a bell—the bell which once heard is never afterwards forgotten. It was no dream now, it rang out again and again—now loudly, as if in despair—and then fainter—and fainter—and fainter—but still the girl stirred not. And once more, after all had been long still, it burst forth, and she shrieked wildly, trying in vain to rise, and dragging herself along the ground, which she tore up in many places with her nails, and at length reaching the door with difficulty, swooned away



upon its threshold, just as the bell ceased for the last time!

Pauline was better; there was a faint tinge of color upon her rounded cheek, and a light in her soft eyes, as she looked up and smiled fondly in the face of her grandfather. And the old man went back a little before midnight with a light step and grateful heart. Gertrude still lay cold and senseless where she had fallen, and Hoffmann blamed himself severely for having left her.

"Poor child!" murmured he, "it was but natural she should feel fearful in this lone place." And sitting down upon the ground, for he was too feeble to raise her, the old man laid her head upon his knees, and sought for a long time in vain to restore the miserable girl to life. Presently, however, she opened her dim eyes and gazed vacantly around.

"Hush!" exclaimed Gertrude, as Hoffmann was about to speak to her. "Do you not hear it?"

"Hear what, lady?"

"The bell!"

"No, not now," said the old man, shaking his head with a bewildered air; "but often—very often when none else do!"

"It rang to-night," said the girl with increasing vehemence. "*He* rang it! once—twice—thrice—and there was none to answer—none to

save. It seemed as though a spell held me back, and he was lost !”

“Nay, you have been dreaming,” said Hoffmann, soothingly.

“No, I will swear it ! There may be time yet, but I am too weak to move. Go, in Heaven’s name, and save him !”

Moved by her evident emotion, the old man took up the lamp, and leaving her sitting upon the ground in the darkness, went down to the chamber of death, but without alarming the medical officer in attendance, believing it to be but the girl’s own vivid fancy. One after the other Peter Hoffmann looked upon the pale, changeless features of the dead, as they lay with the motionless cord between their white fingers ; until he came at length to a coffin but recently deposited, that of the young Englishman, and a cold shudder passed over him. The corpse was turned half round, the features, a few hours ago so smiling and peaceful, fearfully distorted ; and the firmly-clenched hands, instead of the rope which had failed in that hour of untold agony and a second death, held each a mass of bright sunny hair, torn away with the last effort of expiring nature. And while the old man yet stood motionless, and horror-stricken, a wild woman’s shriek rose suddenly up in that still place, and Gertrude

fell senseless upon the bier of him she had loved and destroyed !

Years have passed away since that fatal night, and Karl Holzenhäuser, after a lengthened absence from his native land, brought home a young and gentle English wife, to whom his affection was to be henceforth all in all, for she had none else in the world to love or care for her. Almost their first visit was to the cemetery, where a simple grave-stone marked the resting-place of poor Frank Kennedy, and a chaplet of fresh flowers that he was yet unforgotten. A young girl knelt beside it, with her sunny brow pressed thoughtfully against the cold marble, to whom the doctor spoke kindly as to an old friend. It was Peter Hoffmann's little Pauline, and she told them that the old man too was dead.

"Come, come, Margaret!" exclaimed Karl Holzenhäuser at length, as the lady still wept and wrung her hands beside the grave; "did you not promise me that you would be calm?"

"Yes, yes, forgive me, Karl!" and she rose up meekly, and taking his arm they walked slowly away.

"One moment!" exclaimed Pauline, obeying the uncontrollable impulse of her own quick feelings. "Do tell me of her—of poor Gertrude! Does she yet live?"

"She does not!" replied the doctor.

**“ Thank Heaven ! ” murmured the child, “ they are united at last ! ”**

**“ You hear her, Margaret ? ”**

**“ Yes, I am wrong to grieve you by sorrowing thus, but should rather be thankful that she is at rest ! ” And a calmness fell upon the wearied spirit of the grief-stricken girl from that hour**

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## THE FATAL CORRESPONDENCE.

FACT, NOT FICTION.

BY ELIZA JULIA SPARROW.

"Am I awake, or is it all illusion?"—THE ROMAN FATHER: *Trag.*

"*Cæsar.* Et tu, Brute? Then fall, Cæsar."—SHAKSPEARE.

It was a busy night in the metropolis of Ireland that 20th of June on which the Queen of England ascended the throne. Every window glittered with lights; and beautiful as gorgeous were the many-colored lamps which decked the public buildings and threw their varied hues over the queenly city. Many a banquet was spread to celebrate the event; and many a ball room was filled with gay and brilliant guests, whilst bands of music pealed far and wide.

It was on that night that, amongst a dazzling crowd assembled at the residence of Lady S——, in —— Square, the handsome daughter of a baronet attracted the admiration of the lighthearted and imaginative

Alfred Fitzallen, then a student in — College. Alfred was young and good looking, high spirited and ingenuous ; fresh from his mother's home, his mind was as pure and unsullied as it had been in childhood. His figure was tall and manly, and not wanting in grace ; and his whole deportment indicated that open and unsuspecting nature which is at once so pleasing and attractive, yet which, alas ! too frequently leads its possessor to become the dupe of the wily or the vicious. With Alfred, to think and to act were almost simultaneous ; and once attracted by the fair and stately Helen B——, it took him but another moment to get an introduction and demand her hand in the dance. Frequently, during the evening, he was by her side ; and more than once he “led her through the glittering throng.” The glow of a summer's morning was abroad ere the music had ceased and the dance was done, and Alfred returned to his chambers in — College amidst the raillery of his young companions, with whom he was an especial favorite, who each and all declared that Fitzallen had positively lost his heart.

Days passed away, and every time they met the jest was renewed ; and, whenever the friends chanced to sup together, Helen's health was drank with all the honors, and Alfred called upon by many a merry voice to return thanks for his lovely enslaver.

Thus were the topic and the raillery kept up for some time, when one morning a neatly-folded and delicately-written billet was placed in the hands of Fitzallen ; and, on opening it, what was his astonishment to find it bore the signature of Helen B——, and contained a request for the loan of a particular work from a certain library to which he had free access with instructions to have the volume left at —— Street till called for ! For an instant it crossed his mind that it was singular to be thus addressed by a lady almost a stranger and one whose family and friends were altogether unacquainted with him ; but this thought was momentary, and soon drowned in the pleasure of being thus remembered by his gay and handsome partner of the last ball. The book was despatched, accompanied by an entreaty that a like honor and pleasure might occasionally be granted him. It was not long until the favor was repeated ; another and another billet came and was answered ; and thus a regular correspondence sprang up, which shortly carried words of more than friendly import. The brief, bright hour upon which they had met in Lady S——'s ball room was recurred to and dwelt upon as the young and the ardent know how to dwell upon such topics ; and Alfred ceased to *think* of Helen B—— as a passing acquaintance, and began to watch for each fresh epistle with trembling interest.

In this correspondence he showed a mind exalted above the usual vanity of men, in the love of displaying such favors when bestowed on them by the opposite sex. With true delicacy of feeling he kept it secret from all save one favorite friend, young Armand, who had been his companion from childhood, and to whom he had been in the habit of imparting every family secret as if they had been brothers. Harry Armand was a few years older than Alfred, for whom he felt a warm attachment. Though deficient in *refinement* of feeling, he was nevertheless goodhearted and generous, and possessed many excellent and noble qualities to warrant our hero's partiality for him. But, gay even to thoughtlessness, his untiring love of amusement sometimes led him into follies. Reckless and well tempered, there was no frolic of which Harry was not one of the first projectors and foremost actors; there was nothing too hazardous or troublesome for him to undertake and carry through; and frequently his own companions were the subjects of his merry and at times somewhat provoking humor; but the sound of his hearty laugh as it rang upon their ears, and the inexhaustible stores of fun that lurked in his half-closed eyes or lingered about the corners of his mouth, told but too plainly that it was useless to be angry with Harry.

Weeks and months had rolled over since the night of



the ball; and it was only now and then that the subject of Fitzallen's lost heart was revived. But absence from the object of his now frequent thoughts, and the power which Imagination is ever sure to make use of in adorning our mind's idols in her brightest colors, were doing their work on the heart of Alfred Fitzallen. She had attracted his admiration by her beauty; and, slight as a ball-room acquaintance is, it served to leave an interesting and pleasing impression upon his mind. This, aided by an already close correspondence, by which he observed traits of a delicate, loving, and confiding character, was it any wonder that Alfred fancied her a faultless being, and was really in love? Immured within the close precincts of a college, with but few acquaintances in town, and wholly debarred from all female society except the snatch he had of it at a chance ball, was it strange that Helen should become the sole object of his thoughts, "the morning star of memory"? And there was a high degree of romance and mystery in the whole proceeding which served to give it a deep and absorbing interest.

More than once in his epistles he begged to be permitted to wait upon her and to make the acquaintance of her family and friends; but this proposal was at all times postponed to a future day, and latterly he forbore to urge it. Helen's letters revealed, as we before mentioned, a loving and confiding nature; therefore he fully

trusted her. "She has her own reasons for not permitting me to call at her father's house at present," thought he; "but that happiness is in store." He trusted with a "fearless faith," and he was happy.

His feelings had thus ripened into an attachment which had all the ennobling effects that a pure attachment for an estimable woman is ever sure to produce. It made him shun every thing that could degrade or lessen him in the eyes of her whose image he carried in his heart; it made him delight in communing with his own spirit and cultivating his fine mind; and being destined to push his way through life by embracing a learned profession, he studied harder and more closely than heretofore, led on and cheered by words of kindness, interest, and affection that he had never known before; and, in short, he came to feel that there was no difficulty he could not surmount in order to be thought worthy of the hand of Helen B——.

The routine of college life had gone on—as it had done for years—in midnight vigils and hard study, comfortless breakfast tables and untidy dressing rooms; and when the morning of the examinations arrived a considerable degree of bustle and excitement was observable, until every cap and gown disappeared within the closed doors of the hall. That fearful ordeal passed, and again they were emancipated, some joyous and triumph-

ant, others downcast and disheartened, to seek their domiciles amidst the tumult of the busy city, or in the small, dark abodes appropriated to their use in the great square of the college. A short time sufficed to rally every disappointed spirit, and soon all were ready to renew the jest upon his fellow, to join a serenading party, or in any way to make merry with their friends. Thus summer and autumn had been succeeded by winter, and spring had again returned. The air was fresh and balmy, and the sky bright and cloudless, as the two friends walked arm in arm towards —— Square, where the band of the —— regiment had attracted numbers of pedestrians.

“Well, Armand,” said Alfred, as they entered the square, “I have partly succeeded at last in my wish to be permitted to visit Helen. Last week I ventured to repeat the request; and in her reply she has made no opposition, which I take to be at least half a grant.”

“I am glad of it,” was the reply; “we are — I — I am sure you are tired of it, and it is well to end it by seeing the girl.”

He turned abruptly away and joined some ladies, with whom he entered into an animated conversation. Fitzallen was not less lighthearted, less happy, or less capable of enjoyment than he had ever been; but his mind was engrossed by one object, which, from its single-

ness, had taken a powerful hold upon it. He left Armand to his own diversions, and turned towards his lodgings, repeating the words of his friend, "Tired of it! end it! Little he knows how dear has every word of Helen's become to me. Little he dreams how that fair and guileless being has won her way to my heart."

Next day found Fitzallen in high though somewhat excited spirits, having been urged by Armand to visit Helen without further permission. That day of all days the reader will excuse his bestowing more than ordinary care upon his toilet, and seldom had such care been so well repaid. In the afternoon he sallied forth in all the vigor of youth and strength. Hope and joy lit up his eye and flushed his cheek as he bent his steps towards the haven of his wishes, thinking, as he proceeded, over the not unpleasing novelty of his position. Often had he taken the same direction with a hope of getting one glimpse of Helen, but always returned disappointed; and now he was about to see her,—although without her decided permission,—but still to see her at last, to converse with her, to hear from her lips the revealings of that mind which he had learned to look up to as of a superior order. These thoughts occupied him until his arrival at the residence of Sir Francis B——. His heart beat violently as his summons was answered by a footman, who instantly admitted him and ushered him into

a spacious and elegant drawing room, which, to his relief, he found unoccupied. In a few moments the door opened, and a lady entered, in whom he at once recognized Helen B——. He advanced towards her, but was checked by her dropping a low courtesy and requesting him with a graceful and unembarrassed air to be seated. She at once entered into conversation with him on the trifling occurrences of the day with the ease and dignity of one accustomed to do the honors of her father's house—which was the case, as she was the only child of Sir Francis, and had long since lost her mother. Somewhat puzzled and abashed by her manner, Alfred experienced a painful sinking of the heart. Was she a coquette, thought he, that she would not recognize him? Could he have been deceived? Could this self-possessed and indifferent lady be the tender, the kind, the gentle Helen whom fancy had so often painted, and whom he expected to see trembling and shrinking with a sweet bashfulness when brought into the actual presence of him who had so long been the sharer of her every thought? He felt like one in a dream. At length he summoned courage to recur to their first meeting at Lady S——'s ball. She replied that she well remembered the ball, as it had been her first, but she did not recollect having had the pleasure of seeing him there. "But forgive me," she added hastily, and with a smile, observing

the shade that crossed his face ; " you must forgive me, Mr. Fitzallen, if I cannot exactly call to memory every partner that led me out at my first ball." This was said with so much frankness and courtesy that it was impossible to doubt its sincerity. Alfred felt bewildered ; something was wrong, and he could hardly tell what, in the confusion of his thoughts ; but, at all events, he came to the resolution of unravelling the mystery, cost what it might. The delicacy and awkwardness of his present situation were as nothing to the intense pain that throbbed in his temples and weighed down his whole being ; and without further preamble, he frankly, though timidly, stated that he had been under the impression, for many months, of having had the honor and happiness of a correspondence with her. The lady colored deeply, and astonishment was depicted on her countenance ; and she asked in a haughty tone how could he suppose that *she* would enter into a clandestine correspondence, such as he described, with a perfect stranger. Alfred answered her as he best could, and gasped to hide himself from the sight of her who had been his dream by night and his thought by day. Helen had lost none of her loveliness since he last beheld her. The same stately step and graceful mien were there ; the same earnest eyes and musical voice ; but she was not the Helen his fancy had painted ; and he left the house under the mournful im-

pression that he had been deceived — doubly deceived — how or by whom he knew not, and that he had been worshipping an imaginary being, and not the real Helen B——. With rapid steps he hurried through the city; the idol that had so long possessed his heart thus suddenly shattered, it throbbed with a new and strange sensation of agony, and an acute sense of shame at having been betrayed into making such an avowal as he had made to Miss B——. To seek comfort in the sympathy of Armand was his first thought; and, entering his apartment, he was met by him with his usual happy countenance; but, observing the altered looks of Fitzallen, Armand started back.

“Armand,” said he, scarcely able to articulate the words, “I have been deceived — basely deceived — how and by whom I know not.”

“Come, come, Alfred,” returned his friend; “you must not take it so badly as this. It was all a joke amongst us — I assure you it was all a joke. I had no idea you would feel it thus. Come, man, you must cheer up and forgive us. It was but a jest, and you must forget it.”

Alfred stood erect and motionless as if rooted to the earth — his lips of an ashy paleness, his eyes dilated, and his whole countenance overspread with the pallor of death, whilst Armand continued, —

“To say the truth, when we commenced the corre-

spondence we had no intention of carrying it on for any length; but we did not know how to put a stop to it; and, when we all got thoroughly tired of it, we thought your visiting Helen was the best way to end it, and therefore I recommended you to go. And here," continued he, opening a small desk and taking out a packet, "to convince you it was all amongst ourselves, here are your letters."

Armand did not observe the fearful workings in the countenance of his friend during this speech; but, as he turned to lay the packet on the table, the words, "And it was *you—you—*" broke from Fitzallen in a deep, sepulchral voice; and he fell heavily on the floor. Horror stricken and terrified, Armand called loudly for assistance. The room was quickly filled by the party of friends who had been on the watch to hear the result of his visit, and who had thus, for their own amusement, deceived a companion who was a favorite with all. Alfred was carried to bed and medical aid promptly called in.

"He is very ill," said Armand to his companions, as they quitted the chamber by order of the physician. "Is it possible his feelings could have thus overcome him?"

"We carried it too far," said several, with one voice.

"Yet who could have thought it would affect him so deeply?"



"Ah," said a pale young man, who had not before spoken, "it was kept up too long. I often advised you to beware of such a jest; but you all laughed at what you termed my 'fine feelings.' The shock he received during his visit was as much as he could bear; for I saw him as he returned like a blasted oak—he who went forth in the morning full of life and vigor. Then the double blow which Armand's confession gave him has wholly prostrated him. God grant it may end well!"

He left the room; and how truly had he spoken! It was the second blow that had given the deepest wound. In his anguish and humiliation he had fled for sympathy to the bosom of his friend; and he heard from the lips of that friend that he was the deceiver! The strong man was overcome by the wild tumult of his feelings, and sunk beneath them. The following morning he was pronounced in a brain fever; and the tidings brought a terrible lesson to those who had sported with his feelings and affections. A heavy gloom overspread every face, and told that remorse was avenging Alfred.

The giddy triflers grew old and sage in their nightly watch over their victim; their ears tingled with his frantic ravings; and men who had never bent the knee since they bent it in childhood at their mothers' feet bent it now to pray that he might be spared to speak one word of forgiveness. He *was* spared, but not to speak his

forgiveness — nevermore to mingle amongst them! Alfred Fitzallen rose from his bed a madman! His fine, manly form enclosed in a strait waistcoat, he was borne in a close carriage from the sight of those who branded themselves as his worse than murderers, accompanied by the physician and attendants of that hospital where those afflicted with that direful malady find a temporary relief or wear out their melancholy existence within its walls.

Years have passed. Armand's grief threw him into a consumption which carried him to an early grave. The other partners in the jest mourned long and sincerely over Alfred's fate and their own folly. Not long since Alfred was dismissed from the hospital an idiot — the mournful victim of a practical joke.

## THE HEIRESS.

BY J. C. D.

"WHY is this, dear Constance?" said Agnes Raeburn, as she entered the dressing room of her cousin. "Not yet dressed! and your ornaments scattered about as if some fairy hand had been assisting at your toilet, bringing all the treasures of the East for your acceptance. Yet, now I look again, they rather appear as if flung aside in pettish mood, and yourself, fair lady, most marvelously inclined to despise the vanities of the world, preferring the rest and ease of that luxurious chair to the fatigues of the ball to-night, although you know 'the heiress,' Miss Raeburn, is expected to be queen of the fête."

"And so I do despise the follies of the world, or, if the word please you better, its vanities; not so much, perhaps, for the sad waste of time to those who are its worshippers, as for the wear and tear of the spirits, and even the trial it is to health; but see the gew-gaws which Harrison has strewed over yon table, urging me to make a choice for the evening till my very soul was weary, and I bade her leave me for a while. Ay,

Agnes, for those, and for those only, or at least for the wealth that could command them, should I be singled out from the crowd this night. The mind within seeking to burst the trammels imposed by fashion's laws, and endeavoring to be the thing which God designed for human beings, when he gave them command above the beasts of the field, made them glorious in his own image—the heart beating with all the warm impulses of nature's best feelings; these are nothing worth, these are thoughts and feelings not inquired into. No, 'the heiress' would be sought, caressed—ay, if I were an idiot, the world would be equally at my feet! I am sick—sick at heart, dear Agnes, and already weary of the world's worship. Herbert Selwyn, too! he will be there to-night; he who was the kind friend, the watchful nurse of my poor brother—dear, dear Edward! how highly he estimated him—the soother, the comforter of his dying hour! and yet he, too, has said, 'I must first throw a stake for the heiress.' Oh! would that my aunt had divided her property more equally! is it not dreadful?"

"Not ~~wry~~," replied Agnes, with a bright smile; "I have some idea that *I* could play the heiress very prettily," and she playfully twisted first one ornament and then another among her own dark tresses; "but fortune seldom favors those who would be most inclined to value her."

"Agnes," suddenly exclaimed the hitherto drooping Constance, "let those pearls remain; how well, how handsome, how queen-like you look—wear them to-night,"—and, as her excitement increased, added, "Agnes, if you love me, wear the whole set. We are strangers here—you shall be introduced as the heiress, and I your dear cousin and friend."

"But suppose," said Agnes, archly, "suppose that in my assumed character I should chance to catch, not only a stray glance, but the heart of a certain youth, whom report says many have tried to win, in vain, because—he 'waited for the heiress'—therefore, remember I warn you well, that chaff has drawn many an older bird than he into the fowler's net; and with the aid of these gew-gaws, as you term them, I really think I may make a very presentable thing, particularly with the title of the rich Miss Raeburn pertaining thereto;" and the light-hearted girl turned her bright, laughing eyes upon her companion, adding, "Come, come, Constance, rouse yourself, and be what you really are, above the nonsense, and——"

"Stay," interrupted Constance; "the whim, though sudden, has taken firm possession, and if you love me, you will appear this evening as Miss Raeburn; our names are so far alike, and it is only for me to address you also as Constance,

and mystify the good people, and then we deceive not others further. Now you go more richly dressed, and take the lead, as an elder cousin should do; for you know you are my senior in years, or rather months, for I believe you both laughed and cried for full three months before I could join in either. If people then choose to mark you out as the gifted one, let us embrace the only opportunity chance may afford us, of ascertaining our respective merits, or, I suppose, I ought to say charms, for our merits, alas! can scarcely find space to display themselves in the narrow limits of a ball-room."

"Narrow as the space may be," observed Agnes, "you seem to think men's minds might be still more contracted; crushed, probably, into the exact size necessary for the duties of the evening."

"Why, really," said Constance, smiling at the conceit, "if we were to measure men's minds by the rule of the ball room only, the most charitable conclusion would be, that they are of an elastic mould, which admits of expansion when released from the heated atmosphere. But you know my delight in tracing character, and I should like—it would interest—amuse me so much—to observe how this said Herbert Selwyn deports himself to the supposed heiress."

"How like the postscript to a woman's letter!"

exclaimed Agnes, "the truth peeping out at the last. Ah! Constance, Constance! it is not then the folly or heartlessness of the world you so much condemn; the fact is, your poor brother in his letters so exalted, almost deified this 'observed of all observers,' that you wish, yet dread to prove him to be but mortal. This is beneath you, Constance, and I would rouse you to a more healthful state of feeling."

Constance shook her head, but remained firm in her project. Mrs. Holmsby made but slight opposition to the plan, considering it a mere youthful frolic of the cousins; nor did Agnes guess how much the feelings of Constance were really interested in the result. The letters of her brother, to whom she had been warmly attached, were ever filled with encomiums of his friend, and since his death, the image of Herbert Selwyn had rested within her memory, as though he had been a part of him whom she mourned. She felt as if the regard hitherto bestowed upon his friend came as a legacy to her, charged with a just debt. He had in his last letter besought her to look upon Herbert as a brother restored to her, should time or chance forward their meeting; and had Herbert presented himself before her at that time, she would have taken his hand as such, without a thought of a nearer tie, or that worldly speculations could ever enter into the

compact. But two years had elapsed, and Constance, though young and naturally unsuspicious, had been compelled to acknowledge that self-interest was the ruling principle of the many. She was then a gentle, simple-minded girl, who had scarcely moved beyond the boundaries of her home ; but now that, by an aunt's will, she had become possessor of much that the world covets, she had mingled with that world, and, alas ! had proved its emptiness. Oh, pity 't is when the young heart first learns to distrust ; the lesson is, perhaps, at first difficult to comprehend ; it requires repeated study ; but when once overcome, how far more difficult to forget : Proteus-like, it comes in every form, and lurks in every corner of that bosom where once it gains an entrance. She had been addressed by needy lordlings, who touched not her heart, for they sought it not ; her wealth was the beacon for which they steered, forgetting that it could only be reached through her affections ; and each discarded one only served to prove more clearly that it was their betting-books, and not their hearts, that had sustained a loss. This it was that drew forth the bitter taunt—" If I were an idiot, they would still be at my feet."

The day our tale commences, Constance had heard of the arrival of Captain Selwyn, and rejoiced in the hope of meeting the cherished



friend of her brother; but while in the library, waiting Mrs. Holmsby's selection of some books, she overheard a young man, in laughing mood, reply to the badinage of others—"No, no, I shall make no such rash promises; I fall in love at no man's bidding; Lady Ellen is very pretty, I grant, but I must first throw a cast for the heiress."

"You are right there," said one of the party, in an Irish accent, "they say Lady Ellen's father employs such a rascally tailor, that the poor fellow has not a pocket that will hould a tinpenny."

A hearty laugh followed the attempt at wit, and Constance, with burning cheek and beating heart, was glad to escape notice by quitting the room; but the anticipated pleasure for the evening was gone. A heavy cloud overshadowed the bright vision she had painted. Herbert thought not of her as the sister of one whom he had loved—not as the friend he had once hoped to obtain, and for which privilege he had put in his claim when endeavoring to soothe his last agony. No, it was only as the *heiress* he wished to greet her; while *she* had so long, so earnestly desired to meet him, if only to bless him for that dear brother's sake. Her heart felt crushed, all kindly feeling driven back to the inmost recesses, there to dwell in silence, mortification, and sorrow. It was in this mood that Agnes found her on the

eve in question. Her first impulse had been —“ he shall not see me, I will not go to the ball, and to-morrow I will return to Ellersleigh.” Then arose the foolish whim that Agnes, bearing the same name, might pass for the “ lady of Ellersleigh,” while she might still mingle in the gay circle ; and she then became as anxious for the hour of meeting as she had hitherto been reluctant.

Captain Selwyn, as was expected, soon sought an introduction to Mrs. Holmsby, and by her was led towards the blushing Agnes. It was not a time nor place to allude to hours of sorrow, and with the brief remark that he “ felt as if he had met with an old friend,” Agnes was relieved from the painful position of affecting to mourn a brother whom she had not lost ; nor, indeed, did the bright-eyed girl at his side recall to his mind one feature his fancy had traced as the fair, sorrow-stricken mourner. But if he found her not what he had expected, she was not the less interesting to him, nor was her striking beauty less appreciated. *One* look at the supposed heiress was not sufficient, for he hovered near her the greater part of the evening, and it was not till nearly at its close that he was introduced to the cousin Constance, whose only ornament was a wreath of wild roses in her hair. He almost smiled at the contrast ; it was the radiant lily and

the pale flower of the valley, the one commanding admiration, the other seeking protection. There were few days during the ensuing week in which he did not find some plea for calling on the cousins—to restore a fan, to claim a lost cane, or to urge a sail in his friend Aylmer's yacht; and the tried friend of the brother could not be unwelcome to the sister. Agnes was all life and brilliancy, while Constance, pale and listless, was generally occupied in drawing, or bending over her embroidery, taking but little share in the conversation, unless referred to by Captain Selwyn, which he was rather pertacious in doing, though it was often to support him against the lively attacks of Agnes, to whom his chief attention was given as her due.

More than a fortnight had passed since the eventful night of the ball, and Constance sat alone. Her brow was clouded; for thought was busy within. Had she acted rightly towards Agnes, Herbert, or herself? No; for deception, be the motive what it may, cannot, in itself, be right; and what had been the result of hers? All the pleasures she might have so richly enjoyed in the society of one so estimable, so cheerful—one who seemed to fling aside the dark shadows of the world as he walked with steady yet buoyant step through the paths which nature called her own—all was utterly destroyed—a

life of painful and continued restraint, with a dread lest aught should lead to a discovery of the trick that had been played. She had never for a moment thought of further deception than for the evening; but all deviations from truth go upon the *sliding scale*, and to her dismay she found how impossible it was to undeceive, without acknowledging the cause; thus proving how one simple error may lead to much future evil, nor can it be said, "so far shall it go, and no farther;" for its effects may extend to many; and then came the dread lest poor Agnes should suffer in her affections; for Constance dreamed not that woman's heart could resist the influence of Herbert's attractions, where he sought to gain it; and, oh misery! if Agnes had been drawn into the net, the victim of her folly! At present the spirits of her cousin were apparently wild and boundless as childhood's dream of life; but the trial was not yet come. A few days more and Herbert must join his regiment; a pang of more than common anguish pressed upon her heart; whichever way she turned, cares, corroding thoughts, pursued her. Dear Agnes! had Captain Selwyn won *her* love, while *he* might part from her "fancy free," as when they met; or, on the other hand, had he been seeking to secure, not the treasure beyond all price, woman's pure, disinterested love, but the mere right to call her

supposed wealth his own ; what a fate for Agnes ! to mourn over such cherished hopes, or own herself an impostor ; allow him to withdraw silently, and leave her desolate. One project still remained, she could endow her cousin with the wealth the mercenary lover may crave ; but be it so, each must forfeit the other's esteem, and where then could happiness find a sheltering nook wherein to build her nest ?

As she leaned her head upon a table, the reflection of a brightly tinted sky rested upon her cheek, and lingering there, seemed as if seeking to restore the bloom a few short days had faded. It threw a glowing lustre around her form, which a painter would have rejoiced in, and Constance was a lovely study for an artist. Hers was not the brilliant beauty which caught the eye captive as it gazed, but that far more subduing loveliness that won the heart, ere the eye had scarcely acknowledged its power. She was now tracing back the joyous hours in which her brother bore a part ; the satisfaction she felt, when Fortune first smiled, in the thought that bountifully as it had been given, so bountifully should it be dispensed, holding it only as a faithful steward for her Master's service. Schools for the young, neat cottages for the aged, rose before her, and she had been so happy ; and now one false step had drawn her into a labyrinth, from which she

saw no way of escape. "Yes! it was my pride, my vanity, that required the humiliating punishment," thought she; "for was there not the lurking hope that I, the penniless, might have been the chosen one? but with the brand of deceit upon my brow, how could I meet his clear, full eye, without shrinking from his gaze; and then wrapping myself up in unsocial gloom, he has only known me as a moody or fitful being at the best. My own wild theory, that nature draws her mysterious chain closer and closer still around the hearts she fain would gain, has been swept away, even as the spider's web is borne down by the weight of the gem-like dewdrops of the morning, and I must pay the penalty; but as for poor Agnes, I must try to bear *her* through it scathless." She raised her tearful eyes—was it illusion, or was it in truth the form of Herbert that stood a few paces from the table on which she leaned? His voice soon dispelled the doubt.

"I fear I have started you, but the servant who announced me, retired ere he could ascertain if you were otherwise engaged."

"I have only my own thoughts to engage me," replied Constance, confusedly, and then, as if to hide it, hurriedly said, "you have never spoken to me of my—my cousin Edward, dear Edward! tell me of *him*."

Thus suddenly called upon, Herbert felt

rather at a loss where to begin his mournful history. He had often thought it strange that Agnes had not only never sought to know aught of his last hours, but evidently shunned the subject; he did not wish to charge her with a want of feeling, but rather attributed it to a dislike, so natural to the light-hearted, to dwell on scenes of sorrow. He now gazed on the pale, anxious face and quivering lip of his auditor with deeper interest, and a scrutinizing observer may have seen his own cheek flush and fade away, ere he attempted to speak, in soothing tones, the history of the dead. It was seldom that Constance ventured either comment or reply, but her drooping head, and the tear that not unfrequently stole silently down her cheek, and fell upon the hand she vainly endeavored to steady sufficiently to hold the work she affected to be engaged with, were too evident proofs of deep and abiding love for the lost one to be doubted. "Poor girl," thought Herbert, "this is more than a cousinly love," and he sighed, "unrewarded, and, I fear, unregarded, for never once did Edward speak of a cousin who held any interest in his heart. This, then, is why she so often sits abstracted or alone, cherishing fond remembrances, rather than seeking to forget in scenes of lighter mirth." Again he sighed, and though words were not now wanting to soothe and beguile her into a more cheerful mood, yet

both felt it a relief when the merry laugh of Agnes was heard, as she entered the room with Mrs. Holmsby.

From that evening Constance seemed to shun Captain Selwyn more than ever, giving precedence to Agnes in all things, and the day drew nigh to a close which was to terminate his leave of absence, but as yet he had not appeared to make his adieux. "I am really sorry he is going," said Agnes, much in the same tone in which she would have regretted the loss of a glove; "he has been so domesticated here—I wonder if we shall ever meet again."

Constance started, and grasped the arm of her cousin. "Agnes, speak to me; tell me that you *know* you shall meet again—say that you have not cause to hate me, or I shall be most wretched."

"Hate you, dear Con? you, the kindest, dearest cousin that ever mortal was blessed with—what could——"

"But tell me—tell me in one word," interrupted the now agitated Constance, "does Herbert Selwyn love you, and do you return it?"

"Hush, hush, dear girl; it requires more than one word to reply to two such queries. A lady is not supposed to think that a gentleman loves her, unless he tells her so; and no such confession has escaped the lips of Captain Selwyn."



Constance gasped for breath.

"But why this fearful excitement?" asked Agnes; "rest satisfied that *my* peace is not in danger, whether Captain Selwyn makes his parting bow in smiles or in tears."

"Oh what a blessed relief to me!" exclaimed Constance; "I so much dreaded lest you should have to reap the bitter fruit of the seed I planted. I conclude you gave him to understand how little your smiles or tears were influenced by his presence, when you met this morning, and that accounts for Captain Selwyn going away without taking a formal leave."

At that moment he entered the room, having heard his own name and the few words that followed. "I know not," said he, smiling, "what good reason you had assigned me, for having quitted Brighton so cavalierly; but, believe me, I have felt too much pleasure, too much interest in"—he paused—"in all who bear the name of Raeburn, to consider my visit as mere matter of form, though I grieve to say this must be a very short one. I had intended to put your friendly patience to the test, by bestowing myself and my tediousness upon you for the evening, to talk over the past, and, if possible, to glean hope for the future; but I am to accompany Major Wharton, who starts immediately, and is even now impatient at my delay." And with a hasty "God

bless you" to Agnes, and a few murmuring, indistinct words to Constance, he was gone.

"I thought so," said Agnes, who was the first to break the silence that followed. Constance looked inquiringly. "Sit, down, child, sit down again," said the mirth-loving Agnes; "you have had a long dream, methinks, and I pray that you may not awake to regret. I cannot guess why you should have taken such a decided dislike to that fine young man."

"Dislike!" exclaimed Constance, surprised into the confession; "dislike Herbert Selwyn! who, with a mind capable of estimating worth, could possibly do so?"

"I know not," replied Agnes; "but to be able to discern what is good, and yet not profit by it, is to me worse than ignorance. We compassionate the blind if they stumble; but not those who wilfully close their eyes to the light. Day after day you have sat languid and listless in his presence, apparently unmoved, whether the converse was grave or gay; or if you did perchance give way to your natural character, it was but for a few fleeting moments, and again you crept into your corner, reminding one of a young hedgehog, encased within the thicket of its own bristles, determined to keep off all intruders."

"It was the consciousness of having deceived," said Constance, "that took away all self-respect.

I felt like a culprit, and could not fearlessly meet his gaze; but are you sure, quite sure, dear Agnes, that you have not refused him?"

"I could not refuse what was never offered," replied Agnes, carelessly.

"Then, surely, you must allow that he has been amusing himself rather too much at your expense."

"Not at all," returned Agnes, smiling, and affecting to understand her literally; "he was never paid for his visits; besides, if you had not been wilfully blind, you might have seen that Captain Selwyn's chief aim was to amuse *us*, and not himself. You are mistaken in him altogether. To *me* he never, by word or look, gave the slightest intimation that he wished to be on other terms than as the friend of my brother; and I flatter myself, that although no prude, the most fastidious could not accuse me of flirting with him. In truth, I think he was rather disappointed in me at first—that it was a matter of some difficulty to bring himself to a state of cordial approval—and I firmly believe, had I shown any symptoms of growing partiality, he would have shunned me as he would the plague."

"And yet he seemed but as your shadow," returned Constance; "we never moved but we *chanced* to meet. Why was it that——"

"Ay, why," interrupted Agnes. "I once

thought *you* might have answered all these whys; but it seems I was wrong, and therefore I can only say it was time most sadly wasted by both of you. He merely made himself a little bit more miserable each day, and you had to pick out at night all the blue roses and green tulips you had worked in the morning."

"Agnes, Agnes, you are now flinging your shafts at random. I feel that I was both weak and wicked in so risking your happiness, and most thankful am I that your own good sense—"

"Stay; do not bestow praise where no praise is due. I might choose to be offended at the supposition that I could be so readily won; but even this is praise I ask not for. The owner of an occupied house seeks not another tenant. In fact, I thought you had guessed long ago why a somewhat mysterious looking ring was so prized by me; or that you had observed that my face was full a hair's breadth longer for two whole days after the poor but gallant Lieutenant Fielding sailed for the Cape; and be assured, dear Constance, if health be spared, or promotion given, I shall not envy—no, not even a Mrs. Herbert Selwyn."

"And yet you never told me of your engagement. Oh, Agnes! I should not have been thus secret with you! I might have aided you—I could, perhaps, now."

"I know it, I feel it, dear Constance, and it

was that which caused me to guard my secret. When the poor complain to the rich that fortune favors them not—that years of patient toil must ensue ere they can *afford* to be happy—is it not as a beggar pleading for grace?”

“A beggar, Agnes! and to me! when you know you are to me as a sister! when you know, or know it now, that the day I become of age you will no longer feel that years of toil must pass away ere you can venture to be happy. Dear, dear girl! you are worthy of his love.”

The cousins parted for the night, the one to dream in hope, the other to weep over that one dark hour in which she had admitted deception as a guest. She was the more provoked with herself because she felt that had she, on Herbert's first visit after the ball, laughed at the mistake that had arisen from their foolish frolic, all might have been well; at least, she would not have had to reflect upon herself; but naturally timid and retiring, and ashamed to own the *cause* for so fanciful an exchange of character at the moment, it afterwards became such a deliberately false position, she could not disentangle herself. Had she appeared in her own sweet, natural character, she would have retained not only her self-esteem, but probably gained that of the only man for whom she felt an interest beyond the passing crowd. Not that Constance was what is termed

in love; she admired the character of Herbert more than his face or figure, although both had been pronounced faultless; but she regarded him as the faithful friend of her brother,—her own promised friend,—and therefore reproached herself that she had put it out of her power to enter on the subject as she ought, lest he should imagine she had a dearer interest in Edward than a cousinly affection would warrant. She was mortified beyond calm endurance that they should have parted as cold as they had met; it was a heavy punishment for so slight an offence, and the lesson was not without its use. But amidst much self-condemnation, one ray of satisfaction beamed over her mind,—the supposed heiress, attractive as she was, had not drawn Herbert to attempt any sacrifice of feeling to his interests. Had he, like Agnes, a panoply of defence in a previous attachment? the allusion to herself she considered as a mere sportive jest of her cousin. Be it as it may, she was not sorry to find that the term of residence at Brighton was fast drawing to a close, as a return to Ellersleigh would restore her once more to freedom. The *meeting* she had often dwelt upon, as among the possible events of life, was over—over in a way little calculated to make it a subject of “sweet remembrance;” and whatever poets may think or write of the “pleasures of memory,” it is more than doubtful if its pains do not predominate.

While there is any probability that our own efforts may be usefully employed towards attaining any desired object, we dream on, with a morbid hope that though we reach it not, a change may come; for Hope, however beautiful, however cheering, she may be at times, throwing a light and charm over life's darker shadows, as the unseen sun that from beneath the heavy cloud flings a gleam of golden radiance on the mountain's brow, still in her fitful moods she misleads her votaries, and thus suspense too often preys upon the mind, and wears out the tenement of clay that formed its shrine; but when once made fully aware that it comes not within the range of possibilities, no rational mind would continue to cherish the thought; even childhood pines not that the bright stars cannot be brought within its grasp. Nor was Constance one to sigh after, or expect that all things were to minister to her pleasure. To alleviate sorrow, to rescue from poverty, by giving employment rather than bread, was now her chief delight at Ellersleigh, and while planning for the benefit of others she reaped a rich reward, for self was lost in sympathy; and while she felt that neither perfect happiness, nor individual perfection was among the designs of Providence, she may be forgiven if she soon began to look upon her error, not with less disapproval, but as of less evil in its consequences.

Another year, and Constance had full possession of Ellersleigh, while Agnes, no longer a *dependant* companion, was still the friend of her heart, and companion of her brightest hours. They were sitting in the prettiest of all pretty boudoirs, when a lengthened yawn from Constance rather startled her companion. "I am becoming dolorous," said Constance, smiling; "I like not the fuss and fatigue, the nonsense and parade, that must inevitably attend on going to London; we are far more happy here, Agnes."

"Far," was the laconic reply. Another pause.

"I do not suppose Mrs. Holmsby has any particular wish to go this season?"

"Perhaps not."

"Agnes, you are a provoking creature! you see I am dying to devise some plea for not going to London, and you will not aid me."

"I am no witch to guess what is not even whispered," returned Agnes; "but rather than you should die, I am ready to give you every possible aid, more especially as it suits so well with my own humor."

"And yet," rejoined Constance, "I do not mean to spend the summer here; beautiful as this place is, and much as I love it, I have set my heart upon some wandering expedition."

"Broken hearts are sad memorials of life," said Agnes, laughingly; "pity yours should be



broken for so slight a cause. Whither would you go?"

"Anywhere rather than to the court; I *must* there appear as the *nouveau riche*; and I know you will laugh at me, but I still have a—a—no, not exactly a *dread*, but certainly a great dislike to throwing myself in the way of Herbert Selwyn in that character."

"I will not laugh," returned Agnes, gravely, "because I grieve to see that you still allow him to exercise such undue influence over you."

"Undue influence!" repeated the astonished Constance; "he has *none* over me."

"Then why regulate your movements by any consideration for what he may choose to say or think?"

It was a puzzling question—one she cared not to solve. She knew it not, and yet when conscience, who had so long slumbered in sweet security, now presented his reflecting glass, she but too plainly saw that every thought and action had been guided by the question "would *he* approve?" There was a long and awkward pause; and Agnes was rather amused than surprised when Constance broke the silence by replying to her own thoughts—"Yet it is very natural to wish to gain the approval of those whom we esteem."

This was certainly not quite an answer to the

question put, but the ready reply of Agnes, "*Very*," seemed to be sufficient evidence that she was understood; and, glad to escape further catechizing, added, "I have a great desire to see something of the Welsh coast. Dear Edward used to speak in raptures of the scenery, and often promised that when I had 'learned my lessons as a good child,' meaning when I should emerge from the school-room, he would take me on an exploring expedition. His account of the Devil's Bridge is still so vividly before me, that I long to visit it."

"There, then, let us go," said Agnes, to whom thought and decision were synonymous terms. "When shall we start?"

"Not to-day," rejoined Constance, laughing; "although I see that you have, in your mind's eye, not only packed all necessary things, but actually seated yourself in the carriage."

"True, dear cousin of mine! if you had a little of my prompt readiness, and I had a little of your more prudent reflection, what beautiful characters we should present to the world."

"My prudent reflection!" said Constance, musingly.

"I understand your thoughts. Yes, for one hour we once changed characters; but the repentance that followed is a sure test that nature is not to be trifled with, even in jest. On that eve

I candidly own it would have been better had you kept to the prudent reflection system, and left prompt decision to my charge ; but now, if we are to move, let us not linger, and thereby lose the loveliest of this glorious weather ”

It was a beautiful evening in June, when the cousins, accompanied by Mrs. Holmsby, drove to one of the best houses on the terrace at Aberystwith. To see her young friends happy, was joy enough for Mrs. Holmsby, for she truly loved them both, though Constance was more especially dear to her. She was the child of him who, in early life, had first taught her heart to love, though adverse circumstances prevented their union, and he wedded another. In two short years Mrs. Raeburn became a widow, and from that hour Mary Holmsby had been her tried and faithful friend ; and now that years and infirmities were coming rapidly upon her, she was glad to accept the warm invitation of the orphan Constance to be unto her as a mother.

It was some time ere they attempted to visit the Devil's Bridge ; but at length the day came when this long-intended scramble was to be accomplished,—and such a day ! Life would be a precious boon if only to bask in that brightly beaming sun, or to inhale the pure, balmy breeze of that delicious morn.

“I can go no further,” said Mrs. Holmsby, as

they wound their rather perilous way among the crags ; " I will rest here and await your return."

" *You* will go on ?" said Constance, turning an inquiring eye upon Agnes.

" Oh yes !" was the reply ; but ere long, Agnes, though of an enterprising spirit, and a frame equal to much fatigue, seemed to slacken in her pace, and soon after, when Constance turned to warn her that the path was becoming very slippery, she found herself alone, saving the little ragged attendant who acted as guide. " I shall rest here, David," said she, " while you go back to the other lady." But David had guided too many through that wild track, to risk such an imputation on his taste, and therefore urged her to turn into the rugged path below, and there " everypody stopt a pit ;" and there the delighted girl did indeed find a rich recompense for all the trembling fear that had accompanied her steps thither. " Agnes *must* come here !" exclaimed she ; " it is magnificent ! David, go back and tell the lady that she can come thus far without danger, and I will wait for her here."

Whether the little urchin had lingered on his way, or his rhetoric had proved unavailing, Constance was left long in doubt, for no Agnes joined her. Perhaps he had misunderstood her. But Constance thought not of the lapse of time, for her every feeling was soon absorbed by the wild

sublimity of the scene, the more deeply interesting to her, as she fully recognized the spot her brother had been so charmed with. This brought back many a truant thought ; the almost savage nature of the scenery—her loneliness—all served as fresh food for fancy to dwell upon ; and with a heart full of mingled and undefined emotion, she burst into tears. Why, or how long, she wept, she scarcely knew ; but on hearing, as she thought, the approaching footsteps of David, she started from her reverie ; but on raising her tearful eyes, they met those of Herbert Selwyn.

“ My surprise is not, perhaps, equal to yours,” said he, “ as I encountered your cousin on my way, and learned from her the chance of finding you ; but you are sad—you are in sorrow.”

“ No, no !” cried Constance, rousing herself to something like self-possession ; “ only weak—foolish—anything you like to fancy of woman’s capricious feelings ; or, in truth, I believe it was the power—the majesty of nature, that called forth nature’s tears.”

How long they sat in converse there, the heart of Constance knew not, though the hand of her watch had wearily passed its hourly round ; but now she began to think they ought to wend their way back. She would have given worlds to have said “ I have a claim upon your friendship that you know not of—one sanctified by the last

wishes of the dead, although my pride has hitherto disdained to own it." But how could she possibly introduce such a subject? While his clear, confiding eye rested upon her, how could she say that she had passed for what she was not, to try his strength—to test whether mercenary feeling or honorable principle had the vantage ground? She could not, for one look might have told the least observing that Captain Selwyn was not a man to sell either his honor or his happiness; and yet, now that he was once more thrown into her society, it must be told; for she could not—would not again subject herself to the painful restraint she had previously suffered, however mortifying the result. These thoughts gave a momentary depression, but Captain Selwyn was too much occupied by his own thoughts and feelings to heed it much.

"I so anxiously awaited the spring," said he, after a pause, "as I concluded your cousin would be among the gayest of the gay, this season, and I had the vanity to hope she would again allow me the *entrée* of a friend, wherever she may take up her abode." "He *does* love Agnes, then, after all," thought Constance. "Imagine, then, my disappointment," added he, "on learning from a friend that she had flown to the mountains of Wales, rather than walk as one of the fairest of the fair who crowd our brilliant court."

"She is indeed beautiful," murmured Constance, "and well fitted to walk the palace as her home."

"Almost too handsome," returned Herbert, laughingly; "she takes the mind captive, as it were, by storm; yet the prisoner, though bound, is not always subdued—he can be rebellious, even in the hands of his jailer."

The smiles of Constance returned, but they were soon chased away, as Herbert pointed out a peculiar beauty in the cataract, which was familiar to him through the vivid description of his poor friend, Edward Raeburn. Constance gazed silently, and the full tear stood upon her cheek.

"He was very dear to you?" said Herbert, stooping as if to pick up something, and in a voice so tremulously low, that none but the sensitive ear of love could have caught the sound.

"*Very*," was all the reply she had voice to give, as her hand was now pressed between those of her companion.

"Will not time soothe the heart, and teach it to forget?"

Constance shook her head.

"Miss Raeburn—Constance—dear Constance!—forgive me. You know not how deeply I have loved you, and even now have sought you among these wilds, to ask if devoted love can compensate for the superfluities of life. Its comforts, though

not its luxuries, my moderate income might still command. I have sometimes dreamed in hope, and there have been hours in which I have dared to plant a beauteous paradise, your own bright form flitting among its bowers, as mistress there; but, now," added he, mournfully, "now that I would ask you to realize the dream, your heart still sorrows over the dead."

"He was my brother," sobbed Constance; and the noble woods of Ellersleigh never found such favor in her sight as at that moment. We need not follow the process of unwinding the tangled skein, now that the clue was in the grasp of one so expert in his attempts to unravel the past as Herbert proved to be; and so judiciously and carefully did he untie each knot, that ere they reached their weary companions, Constance, though with blushing cheek and averted eye, no longer shrunk from taking her station as "the Heiress."



## THE PAINTER'S REVEALING.

BY CAMILLA TOULMIN.

"I AM angry and out of patience," I exclaimed—verifying my words, I am afraid, by voice and manner—"at hearing such idle stories, without a word of truth from beginning to end."

"Then," replied one of the chatters, whose inventive faculty or industry in repeating gossip had vexed me so much, "then, if it were not his bad temper or unkindness, or her having formed another attachment while he was in India, what was it that two months after their marriage drove her——"

"Yes," interrupted another, "you were at the wedding, and were so intimate with them, you must know all about it. Do tell."

And I resolved I would tell, so far as it is possible to describe a tragedy, the elements of which rest in emotions, rather than in action.

It is true that I was at the marriage of Adelaide Bromley, and, in fact, spent the week preceding that event with her; but, if I were to speak of the shadow which seemed fitfully—from time to time—to fall around us during that period, I

should be laughed at for superstition. All was sunshine to the understanding; but, though we only felt the shadow as something subtle and indefinite, incomprehensible and vexatious, there was a reality which cast it. For my own part, I look with awe and reverence, not with scorn, upon those mysterious forebodings of coming events which seem to bring us into communion with some Invisible Presence. The grandest truths of humanity are those we feel intuitively, and which reason is too weak to teach or to follow.

Adelaide was not strictly beautiful; yet those who had known her the longest admired her the most. Her face had the power of most varied expression, with a permanent mingling of goodness and a touch of thoughtful sadness that went to the heart. Where suffering has once impressed its signet, the seal remains even through long years of joy and gladness. She was the only child of a wealthy merchant; a man whose mind had been narrowed down to one thought, the mere accumulation of gold. A task, which, if an *end*, and not a *means* for nobler endeavor, cannot be a whit more dignified than that of the rag and bone gatherer of the streets. He had been "a brute of a husband" to the meekest and gentlest of wives, a harsh master in his household, and a tyrant to his child, who, after all, was the only

creature in the world that he really regarded with anything approaching human affection. Not that it was other than a selfish feeling ; he liked to have her about him, and he made her perform pretty nearly the double duties of valet and private secretary. And she was so amiable she *would* learn to tie his cravat just in the particular bow he desired ; and she stiffened and cramped her legible and lady-like handwriting because he complained that her “g” and “y” were alike, and her “u” and “n” indistinguishable.

In a dull, monotonous life, with her warm, susceptible heart and brilliant imagination feeding upon themselves, passed those few early years of womanhood which are commonly looked upon as the brightest, and are so often the saddest, of existence. Sad they surely must be when character and circumstance are at war, and the spirit is bowed by the shackles it has not power or even the will to rend. Adelaide was two-and-twenty before the epoch of her life arrived—before she met Laurence Dorton. Admirably suited to each other in mind and disposition, in age and in station, a warm attachment sprung up between them, which, though born of that mysterious affinity which marked them for each other, was love at first sight, was yet a love that took some months fully to ripen. There was no rational or prudential objection to the marriage ; but the

tyrant father, unwilling to part with one so necessary to his comfort as Adelaide had become, insisted, as the condition of his consent, that Laurence should spend five years in Calcutta, there to conduct the mercantile affairs of the house in which he was a partner. Of course, the plea was, that such a sacrifice could alone swell his fortune to the amount Mr. Bromley considered it necessary for him to possess; but Laurence Dorton had already wealth, and more than wealth enough to supply every want of himself and his chosen one, without relying on a guinea from her avaricious father. In reality, the heartless old man as deliberately inflicted the misery of exile and separation on Laurence and Adelaide for his own gratification and convenience, as ever the rack or the horrors of the torture-chamber were, in the olden time, called into requisition at the bidding of unscrupulous power.

Strong in the energies and hopes of youth—stronger yet in their perfect faith in each other, they parted; and, if it were a virtue for them so to submit, well was it they knew not the full bitterness of the ordeal to which they had condemned themselves; else might the temptation to a different path have proved too strong for them. Keenly as Laurence felt the separation, his regrets, after the first agony of parting was over, were naturally less intense than those of

Adelaide; not that I would cite an example that should throw a feather's weight into the scale of that orthodox opinion which novel writers and romancists have gone far to create. Laurence Dorton loved as deeply and devotedly as the gentle girl to whom he was betrothed; and his cravings for domestic happiness were as strong as loving woman ever felt. But he went forth to new scenes, and to the active duties of a busy life;—her trial was the harder and more womanly one of endurance. Not only did she realize the poet's truthful lines:—

“'Tis not the loss of love's assurance,  
'Tis not the doubting what thou art;  
But 't is the long—too long—endurance  
Of absence, which afflicts the heart!”—

but she was denied all the solace which a happy home and parental affection might have afforded her. Within the first year after Laurence Dorton's departure, she lost her mother—a loss which was the first great grief of her life; and now she was thrown almost entirely on the companionship of her morose and tyrannical father, who seemed, as years passed over him, to grow more stern and harsher still. Indeed, some people said that the tyranny he exercised, and the strange caprices in which he indulged, could only be excused on the plea of insanity; and many there

are who *now* positively affirm that he was mad. It is a charitable conclusion at any rate ; yet, if it were so, how many maniacs there must be who walk through the world free as he was to deal misery around them !

However, the daily, hourly, trials of Adelaide, whatever they might be, were ended a few months before the expiration of the five years' absence of Laurence Dorton. Mr. Bromley was found dead in his bed one morning, from the rupture of a blood-vessel in the head, it was said. He died without a will, and his only child, Adelaide, found herself the mistress of above fifty thousand pounds. With all his harshness, she mourned his death sincerely ; for hers was that clinging, affectionate nature, that she must have loved him in some sort, if not with the dear tenderness which the holy tie of parent and child demands.

One of her first steps was to send for a distant relation to reside with her—a lively old lady, who seemed to infuse a new life through that sombre household. Then, as if Adelaide's loving heart had only just discovered its wide capacity for affection, she gathered round her the children of her friends, attaching them to her by a thousand kindnesses and indulgences. Even pets, creatures four-footed and feathered, who would certainly have been strangled or shot in her

father's lifetime, had crept into the house one by one, and found most comfortable quarters.

Directly Laurence Dorton heard of Mr. Bromley's death, he made arrangements to return home; and these were so speedily completed that, travelling by the overland route, he was in England before any tidings of his intention could possibly reach his friends. Adelaide's heart had doubtless told her thus would he do; though when she heard that he was in the house, she put her hands upon her side as if to still the pulse that beat so wildly there. It was not surprise which thus affected her, but that mingling of emotions, which, though they centre in happiness, amount in their intensity almost to agony.

A meeting like theirs is a thing too sacred for description. What though both bore the traces of care and anxiety, and one of the ravages of a tropical climate, their mutual sufferings but drew them more near to each other. Youth and beauty had nothing to do with their heart affection. And yet it was surprising how in a few weeks Adelaide seemed to recover her youthful freshness, and Dorton to regain a tinge of health in his sallow cheeks. The bracing air of our dear, much-abused climate no doubt promoted the latter change, but both basked in a sun of happiness which was not without its visible effect. There was no reason the marriage should be delayed,

and accordingly preparations were made for its celebration. That important feminine affair, the *trousseau*, was selected with infinite taste, it being arranged that Adelaide should not throw off her mourning until the wedding. And the settlements were drawn out, Dorton insisting that the whole of her property should be secured to herself. I was to be her bridesmaid, and, as I have said before, I spent the preceding week at her house. Again I must fail in describing the shadow to which I have already alluded. I can but relate one or two occasions on which we felt it upon us.

One day Dorton had been describing a scene of mournful interest, which took place just before he left Calcutta, in which his life had been jeopardized by a lunatic, and I remember he said, "I shall never forget his eye; there is a look, an expression, which belongs to insanity, that once recognized, is never afterwards to be mistaken."

Adelaide burst into tears,—a fretful, childish flood of tears,—at this recital, and though he and all who were present could understand that she might be affected at hearing of so narrow an escape from a madman's knife as he had had, her emotion seemed in some sort out of character, disproportioned to the cause. There was another day at dinner-time—but of this presently.

Dorton had persuaded Adelaide to sit for her



portrait to a rising and now very eminent young artist, and the picture came home the day before that appointed for the wedding. Adelaide was changing her riding-dress, and Laurence and I chanced to be in the drawing-room alone, when the artist was announced, for he had brought home the portrait himself, to superintend the hanging in a proper light. There was the due amount of trials and consideration common on such occasions, and there were the slight differences of opinion which generally prevail; but finally the spot was chosen, and mutually agreed upon as the best.

It was—is, for I am sure it exists, though I know not where—a beautiful picture. The expressive mouth, and the rich chestnut hair, and the graceful figure, were all depicted with life-like fidelity; and the artist had judiciously chosen the most simple style of dress, thus avoiding the possibility of his work ever appearing what vulgar portraits do become—the “fashion-figure” of some bygone mode.

“A beautiful picture—an excellent likeness,” I exclaimed, in all sincerity.

“Yes, very like,” said Laurence Dorton, but his voice had so strange a tone that I could not help turning my eyes from the portrait to him. “But is there not something,” he continued, addressing the painter, “something—a little

different—rather strange—about the upper part of the face—an expression not belonging to the original ?” and as he spoke his lips quivered with suppressed emotion.

“ It is there, sir,” said the painter, in a tone of evident mortification, “ that I thought I had been the most successful. I flattered myself I had caught the precise expression ; a fleeting one, I know, but still sufficiently frequent to be true and characteristic.”

I could not but remark that Dorton grew unusually grave and thoughtful, and when Adelaide entered the room there was a rigid scrutiny instituted of herself and the picture. After this he regained his cheerfulness, but seemed less satisfied with the picture than any one else. At dinner, by a strange freak—and caprice was not common with Adelaide—she insisted upon seating herself between two little girls who were still her guests, instead of taking her customary place next Dorton. Again we felt the shadow of something strange upon us, though Laurence took her playful desertion in excellent part, and seated himself opposite to her. The beginning of the meal went off cheerfully enough, though Adelaide devoted her chief attention to her juvenile friends ; but when Laurence raised his glass to take wine with her, their eyes met, though I for a second caught the glance. It was a look I had some-

times, but not often, observed before—the look of the picture! The glass fell from the hand of poor Laurence Dorton, and was shivered on the floor: and the strong man leaned back in his chair with a countenance of ashy paleness.

What an evening that was of dim, indescribable forebodings! No one could tell what ailed Dorton, least of all dear Adelaide, who, now completely her serious, gentle, affectionate self, ministered to him with all the deep tenderness of her nature. Two or three times he nearly fainted, and was relieved at last by a passionate flood of tears. Man's tears! surely they are the very lava streams of the burning heart, dreadful to witness! When he was a little composed, I remember he drew her towards him, and, as he kissed her forehead, murmured, "My poor girl, there is time yet—I know there is; and I will make you so happy."

It was altogether a dreadful evening, with a heavy and yet incomprehensible grief hanging about all our hearts; and long after midnight, when the house was otherwise silent, the listener might detect the measured step of Laurence Dorton, as he paced his chamber. The morning came, a bright spring morning, and it seemed as if the night had really dispelled the shadows of the day before. Adelaide looked almost beautiful in her bridal dress, and Dorton proud and happy, as he gazed upon her.

"I think I was oppressed with a horrible dream yesterday," he exclaimed, in answer to the numerous inquiries which were made after his health: "a few hours of sleep have made me well again. But, darling," he continued, whispering to Adelaide, as I afterwards learned, "there is one alteration I have had made in the marriage settlements this morning. I have provided for my death, you know, and it is right, dearest, to provide against yours. Should you die without children, and without a will, your property will revert to your father's family."

"Then I ought to make my will to-day, Laurence," she replied with gravity, "and leave it all to you, except a few legacies. My relations are rich, and want it not. Why cannot I make the will at once?"

"Nonsense, nonsense! no will-making at present," he exclaimed; and continued with a smile, "perhaps you may change your mind, by and by, as to the disposal of your money."

The wedding proceeded much as weddings generally do. There were the "old friends" present, and the dainty presents to those who wanted nothing; the usual amount of feathers and lace, wedding cake and white favors; the *dejeûner* and the travelling carriage.

Six weeks afterwards, long before the pleasant tour which they had planned was completed, they

returned unexpectedly to London. No company was received; scarcely any one saw Mrs. Dorton; but the carriages of two or three physicians were frequently at the door; and when by any chance her husband was visible, he appeared the most sorrow-stricken of men. By and by the servants began to talk in sorrow rather than from idle gossip, for Adelaide was beloved by all who knew her; and then dear friends were sent for, and the dreadful truth was confessed. Poor Adelaide was insane! incurably so, the most experienced physicians declared.

What an affection that was of Laurence Dorton! Well, it was something to have been so loved, even for one short hour of unclouded reason, much less for long years, as she had been. He would not listen to any suggestion for her removal, but every arrangement of their splendid home was made subservient to the comfort of the sufferer. A physician took up his residence in the house, and when travelling was recommended, travelled with them. Amid such deep woe, it was some comfort that poor Adelaide herself did not appear unhappy. Her hallucinations were all of a cheerful kind; projects of wide-extended philanthropy, which her fortune was permitted to gratify; or, at the worst, harmless fancies. But the restless insanity wore out the frail body, and in a few months it was evident that she was

sinking. She died in the arms of her doting husband, who clung with a sort of delirious fondness to the soulless wreck of her he had loved so well.

Oh, how subtle beyond all human tracing, is the approach of the Dark Terror—Insanity! which comes to humble the pride of intellect, and not unfrequently to limit human happiness. Surely there is something wrong, some balance lost, that this dreadful vampire should find so many victims. But oh! beyond all lessons should its frequent presence teach us to be gentle and kind to gentle and loving spirits, for theirs are of that fine quality whose chords may jar the soonest. It is a dreadful thought, but I believe there are thousands who walk through the world but little regarded, too good to have a thought of mischief which would draw attention to them, but whose minds have been permanently broken by keen affliction—"hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick," or long and wearying anxiety.

Laurence Dorton is travelling in the south of Europe, endeavoring to take an interest in scenes of classic antiquity, and wisely wrestling with his grief instead of yielding to it. He has been a generous friend to the artist, whose painting, associated though it be with agonizing recollections, was surely one of the *Revealings of Genius!*

## **THE PAWNEE'S RANSOM.**

**BY GEORGINA C. MUNRO,**

**AUTHOR OF THE "VOYAGE OF LIFE," ETC.**

MOONLIGHT was sleeping on the deep waters of Ontario; the birds of day had long sought the shelter of the trees where they were wont to rest, and the squirrel and the deer crouched in their forest homes, awakening but to tremble if the rustling of foliage near, or stealthy step of wandering foot, told of the owl or the panther being abroad in quest of prey. Yet the fire still burned brightly before the lodge of Shengooeysh, and while a female, withered in premature old age, sat at the entrance, her weather-beaten countenance revealed in the full glare of the blazing wood, a young girl, graceful as the fawn which reposed in the shadow of the lodge, and blooming as the wild rose of her native forests, stood near the verge of the lake, gazing afar into the distance.

All was quiet, save when the melancholy cry of the loon came over the lake like the wailing of a mournful spirit, or when the glancing waters broke with low murmurs on the strand. It was

an hour for dreams, whether of joy or of sadness, to arise upon the mind, as imagination wandered back to the past, or pressed onward to the future ; it was an hour for hopes and fears to gather round the heart, making it bright by their smiles, or chilling it with the shadowing darkness of their wings. The young Indian felt its influence ; and while eye and ear were intent to catch the slightest indication of approaching sound or object, pleasant visions filled her heart with brightness, and glad anticipations cast sunshine on her thoughts.

At length a sound stole on her ear : she started, and, turning, assumed an attitude of yet more earnest and marked attention ; it was not the dash of the paddle, for which she had been watching, which struck upon her sharpened sense, but a distant footstep, unexpected and unwonted. She listened—it was a mocassin that touched the ground, yet the acute faculties of her race told her the tread was other than an Indian's. In another instant a form was seen moving in the shade of a clump of cedars, not an arrow's flight from the lodge, and Sebejanonshee left the lake-shore immediately and advanced to meet it. When within a few paces of meeting, the young Indian paused and awaited the stranger's approach : she had recognized him already, for, though he was still a stranger, it was but a sin-



gle moon since they had parted, and the light which now shone around them had beamed as brightly on the night after he left the solitary lodge, when, with others of his race and two hunters of her own, he had lingered three days, hunting and fishing in the neighborhood. But now he was alone ; what could have brought him back so soon ?—to shores whereon the pale faces had as yet no dwellings, and where the subjects of either the French or English monarch rarely wandered, unless journeying on their business as fur-traders, or with companions and guides from among the red-men, who still retained possession of this portion of their ancient heritage.

“ You are welcome ! ” said the maiden courteously ; “ the lodge of Shengooeysh is open to the pale-face. Let him enter and rest ; an Indian girl will stay to greet his friends.”

Perhaps this last remark was not made without intention ; at all events, the stranger hesitated as he replied,

“ No friends were with him—he was alone.”

“ My father is ever glad to see the faces of many friends ; but a single star is welcome in the sky,” was the girl’s sole response, as, in obedience to a gesture, the white man walked on towards the lodge beside her.

The old woman had already arisen, and was

expecting their approach : she evinced no surprise at the sudden return of her recent guest, nor, whatever they felt, did either she or the girl betray the slightest incredulity as to the truth of the somewhat awkward story he related about his having been accidentally separated from his companions, and unable to find them again, or tell where he was, until, after several days of lonely wandering, certain well-remembered land-marks had that morning given him the welcome intimation of being near the dwelling of those who had treated his party so hospitably but a little while before. The Englishman was considerably embarrassed while rendering this account of his movements, and at its conclusion scarcely dared to look at either of his listeners. But their features were calm ; no change of expression betokening more than that polite interest in the speaker's affairs which Indian courtesy required ; and when the tale was finished, the elder merely repeated the welcome she had already given ; and, without any comment, proceeded to make preparations for the stranger's repast, while the younger stood by in silence, as though no observation from her were needed.

" But Shengooeysh, is he absent ? " asked the Englishman : " it is late for him to be from home."

" We look for him," said the maiden ; " the

step of the pale face drew Sebejanonshee from the shore ; but she will return and wait until the moon shows the canoe of Shengooeysh like a wild-duck on the lake."

The Englishman rose immediately.

" I will share your watch," said he eagerly.

The girl was already on her way towards the beach, and did not affect to hear : but, after a few words to his hostess, declining the discussion of broiled venison and Indian-corn cakes until the arrival of her husband, he followed with a rapid step, and by the time Sebejanonshee reached the strand, he stood again beside her.

" My father has walked all day ; he will be weary," observed the youthful Indian, pointing to a large stone near at hand, but without the least indication of either surprise or displeasure at his attendance ; though Crauford knew not whether there were not some intentional quaintness in the tone which addressed him by a term of relationship commonly used in the intercourse between the aborigines and Europeans, however whimsical it might sound to his ears under existing circumstances.

" Not so fatigued as to rest while you are standing," replied Crauford, endeavoring to make his language at once easy of comprehension, and capable of expressing a little of the gallantry which he would have been delighted to display.

**"Let Sebeganonshee show the way, a wandering stranger will be glad to follow."**

The Indian girl complied without hesitation or remark, then, turning her eyes once more towards the lake, bent their gaze on the water as fixedly as though forgetful of her companion's vicinity ; while he, on his part, regarded her with a look whose intense interest would have betrayed his feelings to any observant glance.

The silvery moonlight beaming on her revealed the countenance of Sebeganonshee as distinctly almost as though the eye of day had looked upon it ; and well that countenance indicated the story with which Crauford was already acquainted. She was not the daughter of the withered female who ruled her father's household affairs, for the Owl had been the first of the three wives of Shengooeysh, and had long outlived her fairer and subsequently-wooed companions. Sebeganonshee, on the contrary, was not of unmixed Indian descent, her mother having been the child of Europeans, carried away in some inroad of savage warfare, when a village was made desolate ; and, after passing from the hands of one nation to another during their internal contests, had become, at length, an adopted daughter of his tribe, and eventually the youngest and best-beloved wife of Shengooeysh. The Ermine had retained no remembrance of the home of her in-

fancy or the customs of her fathers, to impart to the imagination of her child ; nor could she seek to awake in the young heart an affection which she had herself forgotten ; but she had bequeathed much of her own fairness of complexion and softness of feature to arrest a passing glance, by suspicion of her origin, and give a more attractive character to the beauty which Indian females frequently possess in girlhood.

Motionless as a statue sat the maiden on the shore, nor once turned her look in the direction of the Englishman, until, at length, he asked,—

“Has Sebeganonshee no eyes but for the lake?—no ears but for the murmuring of its waves?”

“She heard the voice of the ever-wakeful loon and the wind sighing through the hemlock boughs,” replied the low silvery tones of the Indian maiden ; “there was no other sound until the pale-face spoke.”

“But she will listen if he speaks?” demanded Crauford, eagerly.

“My white father knows that the ears of his daughter are ever open to his voice,” responded the girl, and again Crauford doubted whether she had not purposely chosen that mode of addressing him :—certainly, although he was at the age when romance has not withdrawn its golden mists from the imagination of youth, and

by no means without a justly favorable opinion of his own appearance, the manner of Sebeganshee caused him to feel considerable embarrassment while introducing the subject which at present occupied his thoughts.

This he sought to accomplish with somewhat of the simplicity of Indian manners, with which frequent wanderings to the villages, and amid the hunting-grounds of various tribes, had occasioned his being in some degree acquainted. With this view he began to speak of his distant home, of that island which the salt waves encircled on every side, and on whose shores those of every tongue and every color were secure both of welcome and protection. The hues with which he painted all were bright, and over the picture was cast the rich glow of an enthusiastic mind's partiality for the country of its birth.

"The land of the pale-faces must be a pleasant land; I wonder its children travel so far to see the setting sun," the girl dryly remarked, during a pause which appeared to demand some observation on her part.

Crauford felt the sarcasm, and hastily replied, "Does my sister not know why? Has she not seen the bees, when their nation has become too large for their dwelling, send forth the young to seek another habitation? It is thus my fathers acted. They said to their young men,

‘We have grown too many for the land which the Great Spirit who rules the earth and sky has given us: go, find a country where there shall be room!’ Then said their children, ‘The red-men have lands which they are too few to till, and deer which they have not time to hunt: let us aid them—the Great Spirit meant not that the land should be so empty; there is room for both; and when He sees that they are brothers, He will smile alike upon his red children and his white.’”

Sebeganonshee bowed her head in silence, as though, if not satisfied with the explanation, she had no desire of prolonging the discussion: then the Englishman proceeded,—

“But there are some for whom their fathers have made room, even in the island where their eyes first opened to the light—that island which Sebeganonshee, if she saw, would not scorn it as she does. In that isle there are trees, beneath whose shade the children of the same family have played for more than twenty generations; there are lakes as beautiful as this, quiet lakes, on whose shores an Indian girl might dream that the deep waters of her native clime were glittering before her; tall forests, where the deer lie hidden from the eyes of men; and lonely glens as wild as ever tempted the red-man’s foot to linger in its depths; and lodges are there also, not

formed of boughs and bark, but built of rocks, which the anger of men could hardly overthrow, and which the tempests of many winters cannot shake; stately dwellings of the great and honored, chiefs whose wisdom and bravery have made them respected and powerful in their nation: and, let the ears which hear me listen!" —here the voice of the Englishman sunk to an impressive whisper, and his words were uttered more slowly—"among these dwellings there is one where Sebejanonshee would be loved and honored as the fairest bird which could rest within its bowers."

"The Wax-wing is content to fold her pinions beside the waters of Ontario," the maiden at once replied; "why should she bend her flight to other shores?"

In an instant the Englishman had started to his feet and stood beside her.

"Daughter of Shengooeysh!" he exclaimed, "it is not by such words that love like mine must be answered! Those eyes which shrink from my gaze to the sands at your feet, I know that they have looked into my heart, I know that they have seen what my tongue would not have skill to tell. It is not foolishness which my voice has breathed into the ears of Sebejanonshee—the home of the wanderer is fair to look on, but he will return to it with a heavy heart if an Indian



girl says he must dwell there alone. Hear me, Sebeganonshee ! more than the mother who has left you, or the father who remains, will the pale-face be to you ! he will love you better than the life which the Great Spirit has given him, he will guard you as the manito-mukwaw\* guards her cubs from injury, and watch every change in your mind as the Ontario watches the passing of each cloud that darkens the face of heaven : the butterfly that sports from flower to flower has not a happier life than shall be yours, nor is the bee, who is obeyed by all her tribe, more honored than Sebeganonshee shall be as the wife of the island-chief."

He was silent : there was an interval of many seconds, and then the sweet tones of the maiden came like plaintive music on the air,—

"Son of the stranger ! the heart of Sebeganonshee is with her nation. It is enough !"

"With her nation !" repeated Crauford. "Child of the Ermine ! have you forgotten that in that isle, around which the salt lake's waves are murmuring, the graves of your mother's fathers lie beside the last resting-places of mine own ? that her brothers dwell there yet ? and that her people were as mine ? Has Sebeganonshee forgotten how like an eagle the red-man swooped

\* The grizzly bear.

and bore away the Ermine, that she speaks thus of her nation ? ”

The girl raised her head, and even that pallid moonlight showed the deep color rushing to her brow, as she replied with a haughty gesture and energetic tone,—

“ There may be snow in the veins of Sebeganshee, but her heart is all red ; and the Manito has given to her the soul of her fathers. Let the son of many chiefs find a wife among the maidens of his own color. It is night, and an Indian girl is not able to see him.”

“ But the night will soon pass and day will come,” said Crauford, gently. “ What does my sister mean ? ”

The maiden’s haughtiness had already faded to an air of dignified humility : her glance had again sunk to the sands, but she looked up timidly as her low voice murmured softly,—

“ An Indian girl has but one heart, and that is with her nation ! ”

Crauford could no longer doubt the express significance of this reply. It was evident that another had won the girl’s affections ere he had met her. Yet he strove to dazzle her imagination by pictures of the world she had not seen, and to shake her fidelity to his unknown rival by descriptions of scenes, perhaps too utterly unlike all she had beheld, to possess a fair chance of

temptation. But, had it been even otherwise, had she been capable of appreciating all the charms of the splendor he depicted, and of comprehending the full force of the ideas which could find no echo in her mind, Sebeganonshee would have still been true to the attachment she had acknowledged, and as firmly as now resisted every attempt to win her thoughts from her Indian lover, or excite one feeling of curiosity to behold scenes in which he would never be an actor. She listened to the Englishman, at first with indifference, but after a while he was mortified at perceiving that it was with contempt. Meanwhile her vigilant glance still kept watch on the gently undulating waters gleaming like a lake of liquid silver in the moonbeams; and, had the training of her Indian nature been less imperative as to the suppression of emotion, the anxiety which filled her mind would have been written on her countenance.

At length, with an exclamation of pleasure, the girl suddenly rose to her feet; but in an instant the bright expression passed from her features, and she folded her hands on her bosom with an air of sadness and disappointment.

"Shengooeysh is not coming?" inquired Crauford, who, though he also looked across the lake, observed nothing.

"He will soon be here," said the maiden,

calmly, pointing to a dark speck on the moon-lit waters; "there is his canoe; my father is alone."

"And you expected to see another with him?" asked Crauford, quickly.

Sebeganonshee bent her head, and, without reply, moved with a noiseless step across the sands to the extreme verge of the lake. Crauford followed; but not a word more was spoken by either until the canoe had touched the beach. The single hunter it contained uttered the customary greeting and welcome to his former guest on comprehending that he had returned to claim his hospitality again, and bestowed a kind look and smile on his daughter as he sprang to the shore; yet Crauford fancied that the countenance of Shengooeysh was more grave, and his air more serious, than they had used to be.

Not a question was asked by either the Owl or the Wax-wing as to the reason of the Indian's protracted absence, and but for the inquiring look which Crauford observed the younger ever and anon to cast on her father's impenetrable countenance, one might have deemed they had not a thought or an interest beyond the diligent preparation of the supper so unusually delayed. The meal was at length in readiness, venison and the wild blue pigeon, dried bear's meat, salmon-trout, and sturgeon soup, smoked in and upon

wooden bowls and platters, and whatever fault might be found with the cookery, there was none in the quality of the principal articles employed.

Crauford had seen too much of Indian life to shudder at the knife which Shengooeysh produced to carve his food, or to heed the shape or dimensions of the brilliant shells which supplied the place of spoons, or any other little eccentricities in the supper equipage; but the occurrences of that evening had deprived him of all inclination to profit either by forest luxuries or by the grave and formal conversation of his host. He was besides strongly disposed to pierce the mystery which he felt Sebeganonshee was eager to penetrate, not, it must be acknowledged, so much to calm the maiden's anxiety, as because it seemed to him that the discovery might tend to his own advantage.

Though the Owl had retreated, and now sat by the fire at some distance, her step-daughter remained standing near Shengooeysh, to all appearance in waiting to obey his commands, but in reality tarrying to mark if any word fell from his lips respecting the subject on which she longed to question him.

But Crauford was no Indian, and could not long imitate their conventional air of indifference.

"Shengooeysh was late upon the lake to-night," he observed; "I thought he had met

friends whose talk was so pleasant that it would keep him with them until morning."

"We met friends," said the Indian, "but their talk was like the thunder that growls when the storm clouds are meeting in the sky; like the howling wind that tells on shore that waves have swept over the canoe which the tempest found upon the lake."

"Their speech has been sad; I trust it has not made my brother sorrowful," was the instant remark of Crauford.

"The Eagle loves to hear of war, but he likes not if a chance arrow strikes the children that he loves," replied the hunter.

Sebeganonshee started, and bent forward to listen more intensely, as her father continued,—

"The Mohawks have danced the war-dance and raised the tomahawk against the Pawnee Loups, their young men are near the waters of the Great Fall, and a chief of the Pawnees will sing his death-song before the sun has set again."

"And this chief is the friend of Shengooeysh?" the Englishman observed, inquiringly.

"It is so; my brother has said truly: the Mink thought to have seen the Pawnee rest beside his fire to-night; but as the chief hunted in the forests of the lakes, and had not sat in the war-council of his tribe, the Mohawks came upon him as a panther springs on the deer amid the

darkness, and the arrow has fallen from the quiver of the Pawnees!"

A low hysterical cry escaped the Wax-wing's lips. Her father turned instantly, and for a moment the muscles of his face quivered slightly; but all was calm again as he addressed the weeping girl with a coldness which the presence of the Englishman alone occasioned.

"Tears are for women; an Indian girl should know how to let them fall in silence. Why does she mourn? flowers fade but once; Leksho will die like a warrior, and his people will regret him."

But the anguish of Sebeginonshee defied the restraints of Indian stoicism; and while the hunter looked on with a countenance, whose very immobility of expression indicated the existence of emotions he was fearful of betraying, Crauford's heart was touched by her distress, though he knew it to be occasioned by his unfortunate rival's fearful doom.

"And where are these Mohawks?" he at length inquired.

"Beyond Niagā-ra, where the sound of his voice is like never-dying thunder. The Eagle chief who leads them waits for his young men from the south to see a Pawnee die."

"The Eagle!" repeated Crauford; and he mused on, while Shengooeysh explained how

this particular band of the Aganuschion\* had not been on the war-path when they had accidentally surrounded and captured Leksho, who was ignorant of hostilities existing between his tribe and any of their nations.

Crauford reflected a considerable time in silence ; then, leaving the hunter, he approached where the maiden sat weeping apart.

"Let Sebeginonshee open her ears!" he began. "Would she be glad that Leksho lived?"

The girl started and looked up with a painful degree of emotion.

"Why does the pale-face come with words to torture the soul of Sebeginonshee?" she demanded. "What wish can stay a falling stone?"

"But a ready hand may catch it. If an Indian girl desires, it shall be done."

"Is the pale-face a Manito? Then he may do it. But who is he that tears his prey from the talons of the Eagle?"

"The pale-face will try," said Crauford, fiercely. "What would my sister do to save the Pawnee's life?"

"She would give her own!" exclaimed the maiden, eagerly; "she would give her head to the scalping-knife of the Mohawk, and herself to the torture."

\* Collective name of the Five Nations.



"Would she leave the forest of Ontario for the island of the great salt lake?" asked Crauford, pointedly. "If she will hear the voice of the stranger it may be done."

The girl rose to her feet, and, folding her hands, gazed on him in silence, though inquiringly. In a few seconds the Englishman's voice was heard again, and in yet more urgent terms he asked whether she would dwell among her mother's people as his wife, if by his means the Pawnee chief were set at liberty?

There was a violent struggle in the maiden's feelings, but it soon passed by, as the weaker of meeting currents is borne down by the stronger; in a tone low as the murmur of distant waves, she answered,—

"Let the Arrow stand on this shore as free as the wind which bears the words of Sebeگانon-shee afar to the graves and hunting-grounds of her nation, and an Indian girl will forsake all, and follow the stranger whither he will. Sebeگانonshee has spoken. It is enough!"

She cast herself on the earth again, and the Englishman forbore to intrude further on her sorrow. He returned to Shengooeysh, and, explaining that he had some influence with the Mohawk chief, which might be exerted for the benefit of Leksho, expressed his intention of setting out for the Eagle's camp without delay.

The *Mink*, so the old warrior was named, accompanied Crauford on the long and fatiguing land-journey thus suddenly undertaken, from the southern shore of Lake Ontario to beyond the never-silent Niagara, and when, with the dawn, the roaring cataract and long rapids above it were passed by, the Indian produced a canoe, hidden for such exigence beneath a fallen beech, ready to bear them over the waters.

It was on the right bank of Lake Erie, where the wild beast and the red man still held undisputed sway, that the sun of noon looked on a scene which is every day becoming less frequent on that continent, where a flag has since arisen which was as then unthought of, and whence a snowy ensign vanished, which is already a thing unseen, although remembered.

There was a circular space free from wigwams in the centre of the Mohawk encampment, and already the entire party were assembled, the captive bound to the stake, and every preparation which savage ingenuity could suggest had been made for the satisfactory prosecution of the fiendish art of torture. But why proceed to particularize? It could not be a pleasant subject for any pen, and who that has ever perused the horrible details of Indian barbarity would desire to encounter any portion of such again? But the savage work had not as yet begun; all was in

readiness ; the signal to commence alone was wanting, and, was awaited with fierce impatience by even the women and children of the band, whose eagerness proved the love of cruelty to be inherent in their nature, and shared equally by every age ; perhaps, had the truth been known, none were more impatient for the looked-for signal than the silent and haughty captive, who stood prepared to meet unshrinkingly his fate.

A stern and dignified chief, with a war-plume of eagle's feathers, and painted hideously, stood surrounded by a group of his bravest warriors. Already his arm was raised, and the words were on his lips, when a movement was observed among the outer ranks, and a sentinel or scout entered the circle, accompanied by a stranger.

The keen eye of the chief recognized the Englishman at once, and he advanced immediately to greet him.

"My young brother is very welcome," said the Mohawk ; "will he see the games of the sons of the Aganuschion ?"

"Those of my nation do not love to look on them," answered Crauford ; "the pale-face strikes his foes in battle, but when it is over they are his brothers. But the birds of the dark woods whispered in my ear that the Arrow of the Pawnees had been struck down by the Eagle of the Mo-

hawks ; and I came to ask the chief if his eyes had ever looked upon my face before ? ”

The warrior pointed towards the waters which might be seen afar glowing in the sunshine as he replied, —

“ The mind of the Mohawk is not like the lake, which changes with every breath which the Manitoag\* blows upon it : the Eagle never forgets.”

“ Then the chief has not forgotten how the flowers which faded before the last snows had fallen, saw a stranger fight by his side on the distant banks of Oh-ey-o ? ”

“ No ! ” exclaimed the Mohawk chief, with energy ; “ he has not forgotten how, when the Eagle was as a rush bruised and trodden under foot, and his wings were crushed and broken, and he heard the voice of his father calling him to the spirits’ land, the pale-face fought as it had been a Manito against the Shawnees, casting them down as the moose breaks down the young branches from the trees ; and how he saved the scalp of the Mohawk from the knife of his enemies ! The Eagle does not forget ; nor how the young pale-face became a medicine in his need, and watched him as a dove watches her young ones, until Waneyot† gave him strength, and the

\* The Manitoag are the genii of Indian fairy-lore.

† The Spirit.

Eagle could again flap his wings above the war-path."

"And *then* the chief said——" here Crauford hesitated.

"That he owed the white warrior a life, and would give when he should ask it," proceeded the chief, in tones of softness widely contrasting with his terrific appearance. "Has my young brother come to ask the Eagle's?—it is his if he will take it."

Crauford almost laughed.

"No, no," he said, hastily; "but, chief of the Eagle-spirit, and dauntless heart, I have come as a beggar to your camp—I have come as a trader to tell you of former debts; but give me the Arrow's life, and the white warrior will tell his nation that the Eagle's heart is true, and his hand is always open."

The brow of the chief grew dark as the surface of the Huron when a storm breaks upon its waters.

"The Pawnee belongs to my young men," said he, coldly; "they must not be disappointed."

A feather lay upon the ground, Crauford lifted and blew it from his hand.

"I shall remember that, like this, a Mohawk's word is blown aside; that his promises are like the snow, which in a few moons melts and is no

longer seen ! I go to my people to think of what the red man has shown me of his heart,— I go, unless the Eagle has already forgotten that the stranger's path should be left open."

Crauford spoke in great indignation and excitement, and, without any further leave-taking, he turned angrily away ; the crowd opened at his approach, and he had proceeded several steps before the Eagle's voice arrested him.

" My brother is not wise," said the chief ; " his feet are like the wind which tarries not, though we call on it to stay. What is a Pawnee that he should make my brother's face look dark towards us ? Many of his tribe will feed the death-fires of the Mohawks, ere the tomahawk be buried,— my young men will not miss one. Son of the Long Knives, take the Arrow, he is yours !"

We will pass over the acknowledgments of Crauford, who thanked the Eagle warmly, while the warriors unbound their captive, who, with lofty demeanor and haughty, unchanging countenance, had heard every word of the dialogue in which he was so deeply interested. It was beneath the dignity of an Indian *brave* to evince any great curiosity as to the cause of the stranger's interposition in his favor, or to betray lively pleasure at the success of his efforts, yet, in the grasp of friendship with which Leksho pressed his hand, as at length they stood alone beyond

the boundaries of the Mohawk camp, Crauford recognized the gratitude of a generous and gallant spirit, and his heart almost smote him when he remembered wherefore that deed of kindness had been done.

Noontide beamed again on the deep lakes and dark forests of the West, and the waters of Ontario were glowing brightly in the sunshine, when the sound of footsteps was heard from beyond the tall cedars which frowned near the lodge of Shengooeysh. Their tread was light, but the quick ear of Sebeganonshee caught the signal of their approach, and, with breathless anxiety, she gazed in the direction whence it came; another moment, and her father, the English stranger, and the Pawnee, stood before her.

The Owl instantly raised a joyful cry at their appearance, but Sebeganonshee stood with clasped hands, the image of gratitude rather than of delight.

"My sister sees how the pale-face has kept his promise," said Crauford, triumphantly. "The Arrow is free again to carry death among his enemies."

The maiden bowed her head in silence: Leksho little dreamed of the emotions that downcast look might have revealed. An hour had passed, and still the maiden had scarcely spoken, and at length her Indian lover observed, when none

were within hearing except the Englishman, who, reclining on the grass beneath the lengthening shadow of a walnut-tree, appeared asleep,—

“Did the night-winds bear away the voice of Sebeganonshee, that it is silent when a Pawnee should be welcomed, and a white warrior be thanked?”

The soft voice of the maiden trembled perceptibly as she replied,—

“Let the Arrow pause in its flight to hear the foolish words of an Indian girl: a panther sprang upon a fawn which a dove loved very dearly, and bore it off to his lair to be food for his little ones; the dove wept, for the fawn was dearer to her than all the beasts of the forest, and the fox who saw them fall asked the meaning of her tears; he was a brave beast and a cunning, and he bade the dove mourn no more, for he could rescue the fawn she loved from the teeth of the panther; the dove listened, and the fawn was free to sport beneath the trees where his life had passed away; but the dove folded her wings, and fell into the mouth of the fox. How should she be glad, though her heart is full of gratitude?”

“My sister’s meaning is too dark: there is a mist before the Pawnee’s eyes, and he cannot see,” replied the warrior.

“I have spoken,” said the girl; “the pale-face



needs no thanks ; but Sebejanonshee must turn her face towards another land."

By this time Crauford had risen, and stood before the astonished Indian.

"It is so, Leksho," said he, firmly ; "this maiden goes to be my wife in the villages of my people. A Pawnee chief would not rob a stranger of that which he has fairly bought?"

Leksho threw open his mantle.

"Son of the stranger," said he, earnestly, "strike! Take the life which thou has given, to be a torment greater than the Mohawk had dreamed of to try the courage of a warrior. Strike! thy knife is better in an Indian's heart than the words thou hast spoken in his ears! It was the voice of the mocking-bird which called on Leksho to live!"

Crauford turned away, but in another moment he addressed the maiden.

"Sebejanonshee will not deceive me," he observed ; "she will not shrink from looking upon the country of her mother?"

"Stranger, I have said it,—I am thine!" replied the maiden, sadly, but firmly. "Sebejanonshee will obey thy voice, although her heart must tarry in the land of her fathers. Warrior of a mighty nation," she continued, addressing the Pawnee, "an Indian girl leaves thee for a

shore whence the voice of the Wacondah\* alone can summon her; but, though she dwells with those of another color, her soul will be glad when it shall greet thine own in the happy land of spirits! Why should we talk? The fate of man is like the rush of Niagara,—who can turn it?”

The maiden spoke of resignation, but, when she had concluded, she bent her face upon her hands, and the quickly-falling tears forced their way between her fingers. Leksho looked for a minute on her anguish, then, fearing, perchance, that the firmness of an Indian warrior might be compromised, he folded his arms across his chest and gazed in silence on the ground.

Crauford regarded them with feelings of but little satisfaction: the selfishness which, mingled with romance, had hitherto borne him on, was waning. He had thought that the life which he had preserved to the Pawnee would overbalance the loss of the bride of which he robbed him; and he had flattered himself that, however averse at first, Sebeگانonshee *must* in time be happier with him than she could be as the companion of a savage. But doubts were now obtruding, the game was in his own hands; he might do all as he had planned, but he felt that the happiness of

**\* The Great Spirit.**

two of his fellow-creatures would be the sacrifice.

Silence hung for a time like a perceptible weight on the atmosphere ; it was first broken by the Englishman, who, taking her unresisting hand, led the maiden to the Pawnee.

“ I give her back,” he said : “ Leksho, she is thine. But let not Sebeganonshee forget the stranger when he has left these woods forever !”

## THE POSTMAN'S KNOCK.

BY MISS POWER.

"He comes—

Yet careless what he brings; his one concern  
Is to conduct it to the destined inn;  
And, having dropped the expected bag, pass on,  
To him indifferent whether grief or joy."

COWPER.

THE postman's knock! who is there that can  
hear that seemingly insignificant sound without  
at least a sensation of curiosity, a vague feeling  
of expectation, if not a thrill of hope or fear?  
Disappointment generally succeeds; either the  
letter is for some one else in the house, or it is a  
commonplace note from a commonplace acquaint-  
ance, or perhaps it is a bill; and we fling it aside,  
feeling a little impatient with ourselves for imag-  
ining it *could* be anything interesting. This is  
the *general* effect of the postman's visit; but per-  
haps the letter arrives, and there is something in  
the seal or in the handwriting of the address, or  
there may be certain mystical ciphers in the  
the shape of initials at the corner, that make us  
tear open the missive with an eager hand and a

beating heart ; and first *devour*, then quietly *read* the contents, which call forth smiles of delight, or tears, either of grief or rapture. Little recks the postman, as he trudges on through rain and sunshine, what a load of joy and woe, and love, and hatred, and indifference, and deceit, he bears about him every day ; at one door he drops the intelligence of another human being having entered this world of woe, as it is the approved custom to call it ; at the next, he leaves the information of one having quitted it ; but to him it is all the same ; he pursues " his beat," alike unconscious and regardless of the burst of delight or the wild outbreak of uncontrollable grief, that immediately succeeds his departure ; and thus he goes on, day after day, the unwitting messenger of happiness or misery to thousands.

At the window of a large and handsome house in —— Square, sat a young girl apparently employed in needle work : we say apparently, because, had you watched her for even a few minutes, you might have seen that the little white hand ever and anon paused in the middle of a stitch, and the large soft eyes turned from the embroidery frame to the square below, as though her thoughts were far otherwise occupied than in the shading of a rose or the streaking of a tulip.

This girl seemed to be about eighteen ; she was not what could be strictly called beautiful ; had

you examined each feature separately, you would have discovered that the nose was *almost* verging upon the *retroussé*, and the mouth not so small as the strict line of beauty prescribed ; yet, who ever thought that such was the case, as they watched the rosy lips breaking into a smile of unutterable sweetness, and displaying a row of teeth white and dazzling as new-fallen snow ; her eyes were magnificent, large and soft, of the deepest violet, fringed with lashes below and above, black as night, and so long, that as she looked up or down they alternately touched the dark and exquisitely penciled brow, or swept the fair cheek below ; her complexion was delicate to a degree, the loveliest pale pink and white, with the blue veins wandering beneath in beautiful distinctness, and her dark hair increasing the purity of the coloring ; she was rather *petite*, with a slight, flexible, gracefully rounded figure ; and hands and feet of fairy dimensions and faultless proportions. Altogether, Mary Lawrence was a most winning creature, and if any one were stoic enough to resist the witchery of her face, her low silvery voice, her sweet, child-like laugh, and her half arch, half innocent manner, brought the rebel to her feet at once. She was alone in the spacious and handsomely furnished drawing room, for her mother had gone out to drive and her brother to ride ; and though she

liked both driving and riding in general, strange to say, she seemed to have taken a distaste to both on this particular day, and preferred sitting at home and occupying herself with what old maids and boarding-school misses call "a piece of work," namely, a square of canvas, on which it is the employment of the said old maids and boarding-school misses to embroider very large red roses, white lilies, striped with grey, (*shaded* I should say,) and various other flowers, that no botanist, from Linnæus to those of the present day, ever described; which clearly proves that the fair embroiderers have advanced much farther in their discoveries than the said botanists. Mary Lawrence did not belong to either of those classes of society we have mentioned, and she only applied herself to this task, so peculiarly appropriated to them, because her mind was very fully occupied just at that time, and she wished not to let her fingers remain in total idleness.

And yet the "piece of work" advanced very slowly indeed, and there were many strange mistakes in the coloring of it; here the petal of one of the red roses infringed terribly upon a grey and white lily, while the lily, being in consequence pressed for room, extended one of its blossoms over half the space allotted to a tulip; and yet Mary worked on, happily unconscious

of the very disorderly state of her lambswool bouquet.

The postman's knock! Mary started to her feet, the eloquent blood rushed to her snowy temples, and then receded as fast—her heart beat audibly, but she stood silent and motionless as a statue—her lips apart—her eyes fixed upon the door, and every sense seemingly resolved into that of hearing; a step sounded on the stairs, and in an instant, with a woman's presence of mind, she was again seated, bending over her embroidery, as if her whole soul was occupied in the shading of one of those anonymous flowers though her glowing cheek and trembling hand belied her seeming composure. The door opened; it was only a footman, but he brought a letter, which he presented to her; she waited till he had closed the door, then pressing it passionately to her lips, she tore it open, rushed up to her own room, locked herself in, and throwing herself on a *fauteuil*, began to peruse the precious epistle. It was a beautiful study to watch that young, innocent, impassioned creature, as she read the words of glowing tenderness inscribed by the hand—prompted by the heart, where every action and every thought had reference to her alone; as she traced each sentence, so instinct with fond, earnest, unchanging love, her emotion became too powerful to be suppressed, and burst-



ing into a passion of tears, she wept with excess of happiness ; then wiping away her tears, she read the letter over and over again, dwelt on each line, each word, pressed it to her lips, her heart, and leaning back in her chair, her face upturned and radiant with an expression of happiness too deep for words, she indulged in a long reverie of blissful thoughts and anticipations.

Lord ———, her lover, to whom she had been for the last two years engaged, was about to return from the continent, where he had occupied an important diplomatic post for the last eighteen months. Earnestly had he entreated, before his departure, that Mary should become his wife and accompany him abroad, but her mother (her only surviving parent) was inflexible ; she was too young to be taken into a foreign land, from under that mother's eye, far from all the friends and the scenes of her youth, and Lord ——— was forced, most unwillingly, to take his departure, having agreed with his future bride that a constant correspondence should be kept up until he returned to claim her as his own.

And now that time had arrived, he was about to embark for England, and ten days, or a fortnight at farthest, would bring him to her once more ; she would see him—she would hear the voice whose lightest tone had the power to thrill

her with exquisite delight ! and abandoning herself to the most delicious dreams and anticipations that it is given to mortals to enjoy, she sat, the beloved letter, the messenger of such happiness, pressed to her bosom, until the sound of carriage wheels and the thundering knock at the door, announced the return of her mother.

The postman passed on from the handsome mansion in —— Square, and saluted with the self-same knock the door of a small, dark, comfortless looking house in a narrow, gloomy street leading from that he had just quitted ; he waited for a few moments and then repeated the knock. and the door was gently opened by a woman of about five-and-twenty, but whose pale, drawn, careworn face, gave her an appearance of being considerably older than she really was. As she took the letter from the hand of the postman, hope, fear, and expectation crossed her countenance in rapid succession, and having softly closed the door, she proceeded with a rapid but noiseless step up the narrow and gloomy staircase, and entering a small, cheerless but perfectly neat room, silently seated herself by the side of the little crib in which lay a sleeping child, whose thin, pale face, and attenuated hands, proclaimed that sickness had heavily stricken its young life, nay, brought it to the very verge of the grave.

With a beating heart, and a hand trembling with emotion, the mother tore open the letter.

The handwriting of the direction was familiar to her, but it was not that she expected, and with a thousand conflicting emotions, in which fear, however, was predominant, she began the perusal of the epistle.

The contents were beyond what she had even *ventured to fear*; for there are some calamities so frightful that we dare not think of them sufficiently to dread them :—she was a widow ! the appalling stroke came upon her with such a fearful weight of agony that she was stupified—paralyzed by it :—then came the full consciousness of the whole, and dropping the fatal letter she fell back in her chair, with a stifled groan, in a state of insensibility.

She was desolate in the wide world, her boy an orphan ; who would watch over him and guard him when she was gone ? Parents she had none, nor friends to whom she could confide him. She was well born, but by an imprudent marriage she had, they deemed, lost all claim upon them—it is so easy, when any of our relations commit an indiscretion that brings poverty upon them, and when they cannot possibly be of any further use to us, to magnify this indiscretion into a crime against ourselves, of so deep a dye that no penitence can ever wash it out, and

**we feel the necessity of banishing the offender from our hearts and hearths forever !**

**The postman passed on and knocked at another door in the same street ; a slow and heavy step approached it from the inside, and the locks being carefully unfastened, it opened, and displayed an old man—so old, that as you looked at his bent frame, his palsied head, and trembling hands, you wondered that he had the strength to draw back the ponderous bolts that secured the massive door. Without speaking, he held out the lean and withered hand, into which the postman put the letter, with the laconic demand, “ Twopence to pay ;” the old man looked at him for a moment as if not entirely comprehending the meaning of his words ; then glancing at the figure “ 2 ” on the letter, he muttered, “ Twopence ! and where am I to find twopences to pay for all the scribbled papers I get ? a gross imposition on a poor old man that has not a shilling to keep him from starvation ! ” Then with a groan he dived to the bottom of the deep pockets of his tattered and threadbare dressing-gown, and at length drawing slowly forth a stained and faded purse, he took from it a penny, then a halfpenny, and looking at them wistfully, he offered them to the postman, and with a ghastly grin, intended as an insinuating smile, he said, “ Here, my good man,**

take it; you will not ask more from a poor old man who is hurrying to the grave from starvation and misery—take it;” but the postman was inexorable, and the “poor old man,” once more drawing out the venerable purse, took from it the other halfpenny, and with an air of desperation he threw it into the postman’s hand, and shutting the door after him he once more secured the bolts, and with a feeble step ascended the creaking staircase. He entered a wretched apartment, in which the dust of ages seemed indeed to have accumulated; a crazy table, two broken chairs, and a truckle bedstead, formed the furniture of the room; but beside these articles were one or two well secured boxes; the walls had once been papered, but now time and damp had done their work, and the tattered fragments hung down in melancholy dilapidation; while now and then a blast of wind, finding an easy passage through the ill-fitting, though firmly barred casements, waved the torn strips slowly to and fro; in the floor were many holes, at one of which sat watching, with eager eyes, a large, half-starved, black cat, who, as her master entered, looked at him as though to reproach him for disturbing, with the sounds of his footsteps, her expected prey.

The old man slowly seated himself on one of the rickety chairs, deliberately wiped his spectacles, put them on, and taking up the letter,

which he had during this operation placed on the table, he carefully examined the superscription, the folding, and the seal, but as the figure "2" met his eye, he shook his head, sighed heavily, and then proceeded to open the missive.

It was from his nephew, the only child of his only sister:—it stated that he was in poverty and distress, the world had all gone wrong with him, and now he was about to be put under arrest for a debt of five pounds:—in terms the most moving he prayed that this once his uncle would assist him by sending the required sum.

The old man threw down the letter with a perplexed air:—a request for money—for that money amassed through years of toil and misery and voluntary starvation—that money which was dearer to him than all beside:—and five pounds! he looked again at the sum specified, to be quite certain that such was indeed the amount of the demand; then with an indignant air he threw the letter aside, and began to resume a calculation which the arrival of the postman had interrupted.

But still there was a something in his nephew's epistle that in spite of the covering of selfishness and misanthropy and indifference that had gradually grown over the miser's heart, touched irresistibly on one chord; his sister he had loved better than any being on earth; he had been the

youngest of three brothers ; they were strong and healthy and handsome, while he, weakly and puny, and of a reserved and silent disposition, had been despised and neglected by his whole family, with the exception of that sister ; she had preferred him to the other two—she had played with him in their childhood—she had assisted him in his tasks—had screened him from many a harsh word :—she sympathized in his sorrows, and rejoiced in his few pleasures ; and when in after years she entered into society, and became courted and followed and admired from her extreme beauty and talents, she had still often left the gay crowd, who came to pay their homage, that she might sit by his side in his solitary chamber, and talk to him of those subjects that she well knew had the most interest for him.

The recollection of all this came upon him, though he tried to forget it ; and then he thought of her as he had last seen her,—stretched upon the bed of death, to which she had been brought by that disease which nought on earth can cure—a broken heart. Her husband had fled, a ruined man, to the Continent, taking with him their son—that very boy who, now grown to manhood, petitioned him for what would just save him from a prison—that boy who, in former years, had climbed on his knees—had caressed him, and whom he had loved so tenderly

from his likeness to her who now slept in her cold grave. As these memories, which had long been buried in the lapse of years of neglect, and misery and calculation, and avarice, once more awoke in the old man's breast, the bank that had so long dammed up all the softer and kindlier feelings of his nature at length gave way, and the miser, who laughed at and despised the griefs of others, now hid his face in his hands, and tears — tears such as the tender and soft-hearted shed — fell slowly down his blanched and withered cheek, and glistened, like the soft dew from heaven, on the letter that had called them forth. Oh, there is a blessing in tears! they wash out sin and sorrow; they sweep away in their course coldness and hardness of heart; they are the purest, the humblest, and most moving tribute we can offer to an afflicted fellow-creature, or a justly offended Creator! For a while the old man wept in silence; then rising from his seat he proceeded to one of the chests which stood in the room: slowly unlocking it, he took from it the sum of twenty guineas, counted them over, looked at them wistfully, then suddenly, as if fearing that his resolution would fail, he hastily put them up, with a few lines to his nephew. Then stamping on the floor, the summons was answered by a little girl of about fourteen, who, beside himself, was the only inmate of



the wretched dwelling, and whose pale, pinched, and careworn countenance was but too well in harmony with the house, and with its master; to her he confided the packet, with strict charges as to where it was to be taken, and then, as if determined to finish the day with a second act of generous heroism, he drew from the afore-mentioned purse a sixpence, which he placed in the poor child's bony hand. A smile of astonishment and pleasure — most unusual visitants — played on her lips, and her eyes glistened with grateful surprise: uttering a few indistinct words of thanks, accompanied by a courtesy, she hastily left the room to proceed on her errand.

Emerging from the dark and narrow street that had been the scene of his last two visits, the postman entered the cheerful and more healthy *locale* of Berkeley-square. Here the door at which he knocked was opened by a footman in neat livery, who, taking from him the letter of which he had been the bearer, carried it up to a pretty, elegant, and cheerful-looking drawing-room: but gently — ere we permit him to do so, we must describe a little scene that occurred previous to his entrance. The said drawing-room was at that moment occupied by a lady and gentleman: the former was, in the two first-mentioned particulars, quite of a piece with the *salon*,

but in the last, the room had rather the advantage; for the lady, with all her prettiness and lady-like air, did not appear, judging by her countenance, remarkable for her amiability. She sat on a sofa with a book in her hand, but she seldom turned over the leaf; and every now and then, she directed her eyes towards the gentleman, who was quietly occupied in looking over some accounts or calculations, and far too intently employed to observe these glances. At length, perceiving that she remained unnoticed, the lady began to testify some slight symptoms of impatience; she fidgeted in her seat, beat a tattoo with the prettiest little foot imaginable, bit her lips, and breathed, every now and then, a short, quick sigh; but finding all these signs of dissatisfaction equally disregarded, she at length broke silence. Those who could have watched her for the last quarter of an hour, might probably have expected a somewhat violent outbreak when at last she condescended to speak, but it was not so; in a cold, calm voice, she addressed her husband,—for such the gentleman was—“I hope you are amused.”

There seemed to be a hidden power in these few words, for he immediately looked up in the very midst of a most abstruse calculation, and unbending his brows from their puzzled frown, he

replied, with a well got up smile, "No, love; but I am very busy."

"So I perceive," was the reply, in the same tone.

"But," continued the husband, deprecatingly, "I can finish this to-morrow, if you want me; can I do anything for you?—do you wish for anything?"

"Nothing!"

There was a pause; the gentleman was employed in putting up his papers, while the lady appeared to be reading with much interest. The desk with its contents was at length locked; and Mr. Maitland, our hero, walked to the window, looked out, glanced at his watch, but still perceiving that his pretty wife continued to read with the most persevering assiduity, he ventured to interrupt her studies.

"What are you going to do to-day, dear Fanny?"

"Nothing!" without raising her eyes. Another pause.

"The day is beautiful, will you drive in the phaeton?"

"You have not ordered it."

"Because, dearest, I did not know you would like it; I will order it instantly!"

"No, thank you; by the time it is ready, the fine part of the day will be over."

"But I assure you, my love, it can be at the door in a few minutes; I will have it got ready at once!"

"No, thank you; I had rather not."

"Will you ride, then? the horses can be at the door in five minutes."

"I don't choose to ride to-day. I wanted to go out shopping, and I can't do that on horse-back."

"But it is not four o'clock yet, dearest Fanny, and if I order the carriage now, it will be ready by a quarter past, at latest; you will surely have plenty of time for all your shopping before the hour you come home to dress."

"Thank you, allow me to judge for myself in this case; pray, don't give yourself any trouble on *my* account; I can stay at home very well."

And here the fair Fanny settled herself on her sofa, and began to read with redoubled attention, as if resolved to put a stop to all further solicitation. Mr. Maitland remained for some time leaning against the chimney-piece, gazing abstractedly at the window, and playing with his watch-chain. At length, taking courage, he walked over to his wife's sofa, placed himself by her side, and attempted to possess himself of her hand—it was coldly withdrawn.

"What is the matter, Fanny?—tell me, love, what have I done?"

"Nothing!"

"But I have, I am sure; only tell me what it is."

"Oh, nothing at all; you have done nothing, only——" and here she paused—"only," she proceeded, with some warmth, "I *do* think it is a *little* hard that I am obliged to sit at home all this fine day, while you are amusing yourself poring over those abominable calculations, and taking about as much notice of me as you would of a stock or a stone, and much less than you do of that beast Neptune, who I wish with all my heart was drowned or stolen!"

"Why, Fanny, I thought you were very fond of Neptune; and as to staying at home, I must say, I think you are a little unreasonable: you never go out till four o'clock, and often not till five."

"Unreasonable! I am extremely obliged to you! Then I am to be tied down to hours like a slave!—I am to stay at home till the precise moment the clock strikes four or five!—I am not to stir one second before that time! But you—you are to pass the day exactly as you please—you are to go out when you choose, or stay at home when you choose!—but I must not remonstrate—I am *unreasonable*!"

And here the lady burst into tears, and wept and sobbed violently, while the unfortunate hus-

band tried every possible means to soothe and pacify the angry fair one; but finding every attempt only added fuel to the fire of her wrath, he at length rose, and, in a fit of desperation, was leaving the room, when the footman entered, and put into his hand the letter we have so long kept back. He recognized the hand-writing, and hastily tearing it open, he stood still for some moments, reading it with an air of great interest; then, without waiting to finish the perusal, he slowly left the room, still reading the epistle with earnest attention.

Mr. Maitland had been twice married; by his first wife he had one daughter, named Ellen, who was but an infant when her mother died; she had then been confided to the care of a maiden aunt, with whom she had lived ever since. For some years her father had remained a widower, for he tenderly cherished the memory of his first wife, who had been to him all that a wife could be; but he was still a young man; he had a good fortune, good temper, and good looks, and when he beheld the pretty and admired Fanny Pemberton, he soon fell a victim to her charms,—wooed and won her. Three years had passed since his marriage;—of his fair Fanny's temper and disposition we have given a slight sketch.

He had been extremely anxious, when he brought home his bride, to have sent for his

daughter, who had then arrived at the age of thirteen, and to have finished her education under his own and his wife's superintendence ; but to this plan the lady offered a most decided opposition, and he, though a good deal disappointed at this early resistance to his wishes, was too easy tempered, and really too much attached to his pretty bride, to insist upon the point ; and consoled himself with the idea that it would be time enough in a year or two to bring his daughter forward.

The year or two went by, but the bride, now settled down into a most resolute, determined and exacting wife, was less than ever disposed to appear as the stepmother and chaperon of a girl whose beauty and attractions appeared, from the accounts she received, likely to render her, in a short time, a most formidable competitor. Ellen was now sixteen : entirely unconscious of her stepmother's feelings towards her, there was nothing she so ardently desired as to be permitted to return to her father's house ; to him her wishes on this point had often been timidly expressed ; but at length she had written a letter containing an earnest entreaty to be permitted to return home : this letter's reception we have described.

Now, be it known that Mrs. Maitland, in addition to her other qualifications, possessed the most unbounded curiosity ; and greatly was it

exercised by the air of interest with which her husband perused the letter she had seen him receive. As soon as he had left the room, and there was no one to be moved by her tears, she dried them up as quickly as possible, for she thought it quite useless to waste them, beside which, they made her eyes red ; so having wiped them away, she looked at the time-piece, and seeing that it was not yet much past four, the fair slave, who was thus closely imprisoned by the tyranny of her husband, rang the bell, and ordered her carriage. During the drive, her whole thoughts were occupied upon the letter, and so anxious was she to become acquainted with its contents, that when she saw her husband before dinner in the drawing-room, she even made such a sacrifice to curiosity as to meet him with an air that said, " you have but to ask pardon to be forgiven." Pardon accordingly was tacitly demanded by great humility and submission of manner, and as tacitly accorded by a gracious and condescending air ; and then the lady inquired, with a tone of indifference, " Have you heard any news to-day, Charles ?"

And Charles related all the news of every description that had reached his ears during the course of the day ; but not a word of the letter ; for Mr. Maitland, perfectly aware that its contents were likely to be anything but agreeable to



his wife, was still deliberating on the best method of opening the subject. By this time, the lady's curiosity was wound up to the highest possible pitch; the manner in which her husband seemed to evade the subject, convinced her that it was one of some importance, which he was desirous of concealing from her. "But," thought she, "I will find it out, in spite of all his caution."

Dinner concluded with all appearance of amity; for Mrs. Maitland had laid her plan of attack, and was resolved to go quietly to work.

It is extraordinary what a passion exists with many persons, of laying deep schemes, setting all their cunning and ingenuity to work, and diverging into all sorts of difficult and circuitous paths, to arrive at the knowledge of some fact, which a simple question would instantly cause to be explained; but then, as everything is valuable to the descendants of Eve in proportion as it is difficult of attainment, knowledge acquired by the latter method is, of course, of little worth compared to what it would be when obtained as the fruit of a series of cleverly contrived and skillfully executed plots, which have had the delightful effect of proving to ourselves (supposing any doubt previously existed) that our diplomatic talents are of the highest order, and that every attempt to blindfold or deceive a person of our superior discernment and penetration is merely

bringing fresh grists to be ground by the all-powerful mill of our intellect. Mrs. Maitland was exactly one of these persons ; and happy of having an opportunity of exercising her talents, her ill-humor melted away, and gave place to an unusual degree of bland amiability. It was a most amusing predicament that the husband and wife were placed in ; the one employing all his ingenuity to find the best method of revealing the secret, while the other was equally busy in endeavoring to discover it ; and thus they sat together in the drawing-room after dinner, both cogitating over their plans, and every now and then exchanging a few words on the various topics of the day, in the most indifferent manner possible. At length Mr. Maitland began, in a matter-of-course way, and as if the idea had just struck him—

“ Let me see, by the bye, the day after to-morrow will be Ellen’s birthday ; she will be sixteen—really I think it will be quite time to have her home now ; in another year she will be old enough to be presented, and she will require a little polishing to give her manner, having lived so much out of the world : with you, dear Fanny, she would very soon acquire it. I think I must send for her ; what do you say to it, dearest ? ”

In an instant the lady’s smiles vanished, and a

cloud, black and lowering, came over her pretty brow.

"Oh, certainly; since you insist upon it, *I* have nothing to say. I should be very sorry to thwart your inclinations, even were it in my power to do so; and since *my* society has become so irksome to you that you are compelled to call in the aid of a third person to relieve you from its tediousness, I have only to regret that you have so long continued to endure it. I little thought, when I married, that it would be so, I confess; but of course, it was all my folly. I thought that you would always be as affectionate—as attentive—as anxious to give me pleasure as at first; but I ought to have known better, and then I should not have been disappointed. Pray send for your daughter at once, since I can no longer render your home agreeable!"

"Dearest Fanny!" exclaims the unfortunate husband, "you mistake me entirely; surely you cannot for an instant suppose that I *could* have such a reason for wishing to bring Ellen home; you must surely be aware that, at the age she has now attained, it is absolutely *necessary* that she should be brought forward in some degree; with her prospects she is too old to remain entirely secluded, and although her education has been well attended to, she will require a little training to get rid of her rusticity."

Now, this was a very bold speech, much bolder than any Mr. Maitland had ever been in the habit of making in opposition to any of his wife's wishes, but in this case he was deeply interested, and being prepared for a scene, he had screwed up his courage to the sticking place, and was resolved to stand his ground manfully ; in proportion to his boldness was the wrath of his lady ; she felt that upon this struggle depended her empire—"to be, or not to be,"—victor or vanquished : therefore, calling all her forces into the field, she burst forth with a torrent such as might have overwhelmed the most powerful enemy.

"She had little suspected that, when he married her, it was merely to obtain a governess and chaperon for his daughter."

Then, as a last effort of power, she declared that he should not bring Ellen to his house while she continued mistress of it.

This was too much ; she had drawn the rein too tight ; it snapt, and the tame husband she had so long led with absolute and unquestioned sway, suddenly threw off all his trammels, and in spite of tears and hysterics, resolutely declared that the following day he would himself set out to bring home his daughter ; and he kept his resolution—he went, and Ellen returned with him. From that day forth Mr. Maitland's rule was undisputed in his own household.

And it was the Postman who was one of the principal instruments in all these different circumstances ; but for that worthy functionary the fair *fiancée* would have been suffering under all the pangs of "hope deferred;" the widow might have remained in ignorance of her loss, for a time at least; the nephew would have lain in the debtor's prison, while the miser counted over his thousands, and tens of thousands, unknowing of his misery ; and lastly, had it not been for the Postman, the pretty Mrs. Maitland might have still led her husband in his gall-ing and ungilt chain, while his fair and gentle daughter's charms would have been left unseen, except through the spectacles of her venerable maiden aunt.

Reader, when next you hear the Postman knock at your door, may the letter he brings you be the herald of good tidings ; so may you learn to welcome "the Postman's Knock."

## **THE RUSTIC TOILET.**

**BY M. R. MITFORD.**

**"To hold the plough for her sweet love."**

**SHAKSPERE.**

A PLEASANT and a stirring scene was the barn-yard of Farmer Holden of Hilton, one of the principal tenants of our friend Colonel Lisle of that ilk, (if it be permitted to a Southron to borrow that expressive phrase,) on one of the pleasantest and sunniest evenings of this last most sunny month of April, when, as if to upset all the calculations of all the almanac-makers from Mr. Murphy downward, and in direct defiance of those safer general prognostics derived from old experience, there has not fallen in this fair county of Berks, from the first to the thirtieth, one single drop of rain. A bright and a lively scene did the barn-yard of Hilton Great Farm exhibit on that bright April evening. Seen between the large wheat-ricks and bean-stacks and hay-ricks, the barns and stables, the cart-houses, hen-houses, and pig-sties, which, together with the old-fashioned rambling dwelling-house, large



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enough to form two or three fine cottages ornées in these degenerate days ; seen between the various buildings which with all conceivable irregularity surrounded the spacious farm-yard, glittering with the clean crisp covering of straw with which it was very literally littered, and giving due token of their presence by bleatings of lambs seeking their mothers, and ewes in pursuit of their lambs, by barking of dogs and shouting of men and boys, were the fine flocks of Farmer Holden returning from their distant pastures to the fold in a rich meadow near the home-stead ; horses mounted by young carter-boys sitting loungingly upon their naked backs, and riding them to and from the village pond with an indescribable air of lazy pride ; whilst cows, driven by urchins on foot somewhat brisker, but every whit as dirty, stumbled amongst the sheep and jostled the horses in their haste to reach the calves, who were lowing in their pens eager for the moment that should at once appease their own "pleasant enemy hunger," and relieve the "mothers of the herd" of their milky burthen.

Mingled with these larger comers and goers, biped and quadruped, together with occasional passers-by, as the thresher or the seedsman flung himself heavily over the threshold of the barn, or the ploughman stalked from the stable to the hay-rick, were innumerable lesser denizens of



this well-peopled agricultural demesne. Pigs of all ages and all sizes lay wallowing about the yard; and poultry of every denomination, from geese and turkeys to bantams and pigeons, cackled at the barn-doors, dabbled in the ponds, fluttered discontented in the coops, or perched in happy freedom on the roofs of the different buildings; whilst one or two small and pretty children, one with a kitten in its hand, leaning eagerly over the low hatch-gate which extended from side to side of the deep old porch, as if longing to escape from this their own peculiar coop, added to the general agreeableness of the picture. Sweetbriar in its tender green and fresh fragrance grew on one side of that old dark porch, and an early honey-suckle, already putting forth its buds, flourished on the other. July-stocks, wall-flowers, and polyanthuses sent their sweet breath through the lattice windows divided by rich stone mullions; a large cherry tree waved its snowy blossoms, scattering light at one end of the house, backed by a rich, rosy-tinted, almond-scented orchard, whilst in a nook between a dark fagot-pile and a huge open cart-house, the sun glanced upwards on an old elder-tree, turning the trunk into gold, and the wide-spreading branches drooping with the weight of the redundant foliage, and the swelling flower-buds into pendant emeralds; the clouds were

white and fleecy, the sky of the brightest and purest blue, and the woody uplands which formed the framework of the scenery full of hedge-row timber just putting forth its youngest and most delicate "greenth."

A gay and a pretty picture was that crowded farm-yard, and yet the two principal figures still remain undescribed. Seated upon a low wooden stool, engaged in the operation of administering certain small pellets of dough to some three-score of callow gaping struggling goslings—(in the pure Doric of Berkshire this operation is called "pilling the gulls")—was a young woman of middle height, whose person, sufficiently well formed but somewhat large-boned and muscular, betokened such an union of activity and strength as might probably be more common in the weaker sex if the bountiful intentions of nature were duly seconded by education and circumstance—if girls took more exercise and passed more time in the open air. Her face could hardly be called pretty, far less beautiful; and yet in the bright laughing eyes, the red lips just enough divided to show the pearly teeth, and a dimple at one corner of the mouth, the clear, healthy sunburnt complexion, and an expression compounded of frankness, sweetness, and gaiety, there was more of charm than is often to be found in the most

regular beauty. And so in good truth thought her companion.

*She*, from her occupation and her dress, her dark cotton gown, her double muslin handkerchief, her simple cap, as well as the sleeves turned up above her elbows, and the colored apron tied over her white one, was evidently a farm-house serving-maiden just tidied up after going through the most laborious of her many offices, and finishing her day's work by supplying the manifold wants of her feathered charges, and milking the kine, if indeed the calves did not spare her the trouble. *He*, a fine-looking young man, rather tall than short, but firmly and vigorously formed, with a bright open countenance and a glowing complexion, was as evidently a farmer's son. His straw hat was placed rather on one side on his glossy auburn curls, with the true air of a village beau, and his dark velveteen jacket, and the silk handkerchief just knotted round his throat had as much of real study in the apparent carelessness of their adjustment as would have done honor to the veriest coxcomb of one-and-twenty that ever danced at Almack's—personal vanity being astonishingly alike in all stations. A coxcomb, I grieve to say, was Maurice Elliott, and yet, being heartily in love, he had the best chance that could befall him of getting rid of his coxcombry. At present, however, to judge

by the dialogue passing between them, their "course of true love" was very far from "running smooth." It was more like a game of cross purposes than a meeting of sunset between two lovers.

"You won't go with me, then, to the Maying, Phœbe?" said the youth, impatiently, twisting round his fingers a long, supple branch which he had just twitched from a weeping-willow that overhung the goose-pond, never dreaming the while that he was, so far as action went, emulating one of the most eloquent women that ever graced blue stockings. "You won't go with me to the Maying?"

"You won't try for a prize at the ploughing-match, Maurice? You really won't try? really and indeed you won't?" rejoined the damsel, poking one of her pellets with a little stick down a gosling's throat, and following the dose by a drop or two of water to clear the passage for another morsel. "Do try, Maurice!" continued she, in a tone of voice sweet and round and youthful,—a spoken smile. "Do try!"

"When I know," cried Maurice, still twisting the unlucky bit of willow, "that you have got leave to go out that very day! Of course to the Maying! and not to go with me!" And Maurice gave the bit of willow which he had twisted round his finger such a tug with his other hand

as had nearly cut that useful member to the bone. "Got leave to go, and won't go with me!"

"When you won't try at the plough—"

"Hang the ploughing-match!" ejaculated Maurice, shaking his discomfited finger; "Hang the ploughing-match!"

"When you won't try for a prize," continued Phœbe, quietly taking another gosling upon her lap, "you who know that you can plough as straight a furrow as old Giles Dowling himself!"

"Hang Giles Dowling, Phœbe! My father was a farmer, and though, to please him, and since his death, to humor mother, I may have gone between the stilts, there's no need to let myself down in the eyes of the whole parish. What would that cold, sneering, purse-proud uncle of mine and his fine daughters say, I wonder? Come, Phœbe, don't look so grave—you'll go to the Maying, won't you? What can hinder you, now that you've got leave? Come, and I'll drive you in my own chaise-cart with my new chestnut horse."

"What would your proud uncle and fine cousins say to *that*, I wonder? You are a farmer's son, as you truly say, Mr. Maurice Elliott, and I am a laborer's daughter. God forbid that I should be ashamed of being the child of an honest man, let his condition be ever so poor!" and

Phœbe, though her tone was gentle, drew her stool a little back with an air of self-respect that approached to dignity.

Her lover felt the reproof.

"Forgive me, dearest Phœbe! pray, pray forgive me! I did not intend—I did not dream—oh! Phœbe, I never think of you but as one so much better than myself! You do forgive me, then?" said he; answering the bright dimpled smile which required no words to confirm her pardon. "You do forgive me, and you'll let me drive you to this Maying? We are to have a cricket-match and a dance, and it will be so pretty a sight! Why do you shake your head? Is there any secret in the matter?"

"No secret at all, Maurice," said Phœbe. "I'll tell you the truth; you'll not be ashamed of it, though your fine cousins would. Poor Uncle George has been so ill this spring that he has not been able to get his allotment dug or planted, and you know the allotment ground is his chief dependence. The children would be half-starved without the vegetables, and the refuse keeps the pig. So father and mother are going to give him a day's labor to get in the potatoes, and I'm going to help. That's my holiday, and a very happy one it will be. Uncle George was always so good to me, and so was aunt, and I

love the children dearly. You 'll see what a day's work I shall do."

"Dear good Phœbe! I wish I could help too; only I have promised to make one of the eleven, and I can't desert them just at last. But I'll tell you what I can do. Your little cousin George, who lives with us, I can let him go home and help."

Another bright smile repaid the kindness.

"But this ploughing-match, Maurice! that will be a pretty sight too! And you, who can do everything better than the other lads of the parish, why should not you be as proud of being the best ploughman as the best cricketer or the best shot? Nay, but you must listen to me, Maurice: whatever the purse-proud uncle or the fine cousins may say, I have good cause to believe that your trying for the prize would please one person besides myself—your own good landlord, Colonel Lisle."

Maurice's brow darkened. He drew up his person to his full stature and spoke angrily and bitterly:—

"My own good landlord! Would you believe, Phœbe, that after living upon his estate, I and my fathers, these hundred years and more, paying his rent to a day, and doing as much justice to his land as if it were really our own, this good landlord of ours, the lease being upon the point

of expiring, has sent us notice to quit? actually sent us notice to quit!" He turned away in proud and angry sorrow.

"Notice! but has any one taken the farm?" inquired Phœbe.

"Not yet, I fancy; but he will find no difficulty in letting it. The lands lie close to my uncle's, and I have sometimes thought—at all events we have notice."

"But for what reason?"

"Oh! your rich landlord can easily find a reason for ridding himself of a poor tenant. The message was civil enough as regarded mother. If she had wished to remain in the farm he would have had no objection; but, as her request was that the lease might be renewed in my favor, he could not comply. I was unfit for a farmer, he said; never in my business, always shooting, or coursing or cricketing; never at home; never attending to the main chance; unthrifty in everything; and about, he heard"—and then, suddenly, Maurice Elliott checked himself, and paused.

"About to marry a poor girl without a farthing, when you might have married your cousin Harriet, with more money than I know how to reckon. Oh! Maurice! Maurice! little did I think when your own dear mother gave her consent, because I was active and industrious and an honest man's daughter, and because the son she



loved so well loved me, little did I think that she would be turned from her home for that great goodness. But it must not be, dear Maurice! We must part! We must not marry, to have your mother turned out of doors; neither of us would be happy so. I can speak to my mistress—she is so very kind—and go to live with her friends a great way off. And you will give up coursing and shooting, (you know you had promised me to do that,) and then, when Colonel Lisle finds that your heart *is* in your business, all will go right again, and you will stay at the Linden Farm, and we shall be happy.” And by way of earnest of this coming felicity, poor Phœbe burst into a violent fit of sobbing.

Maurice exhausted himself in protestations—to do him justice, most sincere—of love, everlasting love, to Phœbe, and hatred, equally durable and equally sincere, towards uncle, cousin, landlord, and, in short, all who sought to separate him from his beloved; assuring her that Colonel Lisle’s whole estate would not bribe him to renounce his engagement; that, go where she might, he would follow; and that, so far from desiring to continue at their old home, nothing would induce him to remain the tenant of a landlord so unjust and despotic, one who had condemned, without hearing, the descendant of a race who had lived under his father and his

father's fathers—ay, even from the planting of the great lime trees which gave their name to the farm. But if Maurice was vehement, Phœbe, whose hysterical sobbing had ended in quiet and relieving tears, continued gently firm.

“ You would not make me wretched, Maurice ; I know that you would not ; and how could I be otherwise if I were to cause your ruin ? I shall go into Kent, to Mrs. Holden's sister, and Colonel Lisle will think better than to dismiss the son of his old tenant. Go to him, dear Maurice ! Speak to him yourself ! Explain—”

“ Go to him, indeed ! Speak to him ! Explain ! I can tell you, Phœbe, that he must come to me if he wishes me to stay upon his land. There are other farms in the county besides his. We are no bond-slaves, blessed be God ! in merry England. But don't you go, Phœbe ! Stay, and let me tell you of my plans ; or, if you must go, promise at least to see me, and to give me a full hearing, before you leave Hilton. Promise me this. Stay at least till this ploughing-match is over. That will be a holiday far and near. See me then, and I will let this dear hand go.”

And Phœbe, blushing, sighing, and protesting against a meeting which would only be a renewal of pain, did, however, give the required promise ; and the lovers parted—she for her in-door duties,

and he for the home he was so soon to relinquish.

They who witness those pretty rural festivals, with all their picturesque accessories of tent and marquee, banners and bands, gay and happy crowds, shaded by noble trees and lighted by bright sunshine, and fanned by the sweet airs of the fairest of the seasons; or they who read the elaborate account of the day's proceedings in the county newspapers, where all is chronicled, *en couleur de rose*, from the earliest procession to the latest cheer, little guess the trouble, and turmoil, and *tracasseries* which this apparently most amicable, and peaceful celebration occasions in its district. The ostensible competitors, whose province it is to contend for the prizes, are for the most part, (the winners being satisfied of course, and the losers soothed and comforted by encouraging speeches and a good dinner,—solid pudding added to empty praise,) as good-humored and contented as heart can desire; their unlucky patrons and protectors, the Association, in its own proper person, having previously gone through as much fussing and disputing, squabbling and quarrelling, as would carry a candidate through a county election, or produce a tragedy upon the boards of a theatre royal.

One committee-man threatened to resign because he was not a vice-president, and one vice-

president did send in his resignation because he was not the president. One very great man, (an Earl,) applied to to assume that high office, never answered the secretary's letter ; and another great man, (a Viscount,) coquetted, and poohed, and pshawed, and finally declined because the Earl had been written to first. The committee had five meetings to consider of the place where they ought to meet ; four to consider of the day of celebration ; three of the hour of dinner ; and the grand question of in doors or out of doors, marquee or barn, very nearly caused a dissolution of the society ; party having run so high that two of the members, after scolding themselves hoarse, arrived at that state of dumb resentment which answers to the white heat of the anvil, and did not speak. They quarrelled about the value of the clothes, about the devices of the banners, about the colors of the cockades,—in short, there was nothing which admitted of two opinions about which they did not quarrel ; so that the chief dignitaries of the association, the chairman, treasurer and secretary, who had endeavored to add to their several offices that of pacificators-general, declared that all the ploughmen and all their teams would not work half as hard on the day of trial as they had done during the time of the preparation.

But if this spirit of opposition, for opposition's

sake, be a little too much the fashion in our free country, where the good yeoman who subscribes his five shillings claims "a voice potential, as double as the duke's," who lays down his twenty pounds, (and that the facts are little exaggerated will be readily admitted by most who have been behind the scenes in such societies,) so let me proudly say the ill-humor, having once found a vent, works itself clear, and the rough burly disputants come round again, shake hands, and hear reason, with a readiness and facility just as characteristic of our national manners, where a squabble once over is over forever, and a quarrel fairly reconciled only leaves the opponents faster friends than before. Accordingly, by the time the appointed day arrived, all was peace, and amity, and joyous bustle, and the scene took its usual cordial and hearty character of a meeting calculated to advance the interests and promote the happiness of all classes.

Some weeks had elapsed since the dialogue between the lovers in Farmer Holden's barnyard, and reports were rife in the village of a strange change in the fortunes of the young tenant of the Linden Farm. His father's will, it was said, threw him entirely into the power of his hard-hearted and purse-proud uncle, Stephen Elliott. There were different versions of the story, and no one spoke as of positive knowledge; but one

fact seemed certain, that Maurice's negotiation for a farm of the same extent with that which he now occupied had been cut short by the intervention of his stern relative, and that he was now seeking to rent a few acres of pasture-land attached to a cottage in the Moors. He and Phœbe had not again met, but pursuant to her promise, she had not yet left Hilton, and was now dressing for the ploughing match at her mother's cottage, with a feeling of lightheartedness for which she would have found it difficult to account. Was she — could she be conscious that her lover's gaze was fixed upon her through the open door? or was the knowledge that he was no longer the rich and, to use the country phrase, the somewhat prodigal young farmer, but nearer her own level, brightening her eyes, and glowing in her cheek, with a hope that she had never put into words, — a hope unacknowledged even to her own heart? or did she give more credit than she thought she did to the report of her little cousin George, that he and his master were, after all, to try for the prizes at the ploughing-match? Phœbe knew that Stephen Elliott had said, with his scornful sneer and bitter tone, "Let him try for the suit of clothes—he may want 'em!" and Phœbe knew enough of her lover's temper to feel that this very taunt, uttered to keep him from the scene, was likely to take a different effect upon

his high spirit. "At all events," thought she, "I shall see him!" and she dressed herself in a flutter of spirits, with which vanity had little to do, and then sat down quietly to await her father, whom she was to accompany, and to whom the first prize was allotted, as having brought up a large family in credit and respectability without receiving parochial assistance. The hale old man, in his well-preserved Sunday coat, with his gray hair smoothed down over his honest face, and his pretty daughter hanging upon his arm, as they walked to the ground after the match was over, formed one of the most interesting groups of the day.

The scene was really beautiful. Upon an extensive lawn, richly dotted with magnificent trees, and backed by a noble mansion embowered in woods, stood a splendid central marquee, with smaller tents on either side; flags and banners waved around the tents, and crowned the lofty decorated building arched with lilacs and laburn-hams, where the gentlemen were to dine; and the large, low, open cart-house, overhung by a down-hanging elm, prepared for the ploughmen; carriages were driving up in close succession, horses prancing, music playing, and, (to borrow the words of the County Chronicle,) all the beauty and fashion of the neighborhood were collected in front of the tents to witness the distri-

bution of the prizes, and, best of all, they who had earned those prizes, the sturdy tillers of the soil, clean, healthy, and happy, their delighted wives and daughters, and the stout yeomen, their masters, triumphing in the success of their laborers. Add to this the lucky accident of a sunny day in the most genial of the seasons, and every advantage of light, and shadow, and shifting clouds, and the result will be a scene too wide for the painter, but rich, and bright, and joyous as ever inspired a poet in the merry month of May.

Phœbe looked only for one figure,—and there, dressed like the rest of the competitors in a white smock-frock, his head decked with a double cockade, as winner not only of the regular match, but of a subsequent prize for ploughing with two horses, stood Maurice Elliott, and close beside him her little cousin George, sticking his hat, also doubly cockaded, as high as possible upon his head, and fairly standing on tiptoe, that his honors might be more conspicuous. Near him, so placed as to appear to belong rather to the gentry than to the wealthy yeomen, in which order he was really classed, leaned his uncle Stephen, his accustomed scornful sneer darkened as if by stronger passions.

The ceremony and its attendant speeches being over, Colonel Lisle approached Phœbe and



her father, now also wearing the decorations of the day, and joined by little George, and, patting the boy's cheek, he said graciously to the old man, "Why, you and your nephew are carrying off all our prizes."

"Add his son-in-law, if you please, sir," said Maurice Elliott, approaching the group, holding in one hand the hat decked with blue cockades of success, and shaking hands heartily with the grayheaded and venerable old peasant: "Add his son-in-law; for such I shall be as soon as the bans can be published, for I have no money now to throw away upon a license. All is settled," continued he, in a lower tone, to the old man; "Phœbe consented as soon as ever I proved to her that not only my happiness but my prosperity depended upon my marrying such a wife as herself—pooh! as soon as I proved that my happiness depended upon my marrying *her*—for there is not such another in the world; and Joseph Clarkson, finding that I am to have her to manage the dairy, has consented to let me rent his thirty acres down in the Moors, and the little homestead belonging to it. There's a capital garden; and during my spare time I shall raise vegetables for the Belford market, and mother'll live with us; and you'll see how happy we shall be!" And happiness danced in the young man's eyes as, again wringing the

old laborer's hand, he turned away to join his Phœbe.

"Stop!" exclaimed Colonel Lisle, who, irresistibly attracted by the sudden alteration in his tenant's manner and conduct, had been unable to refrain from listening to the conversation—"Stop one moment, Maurice Elliott," said he, kindly; "and tell me what this means!—Joseph Clarkson's land in the Moors! and your mother to live with you there! Why, in leaving the Linden, there will be the stock, and the crops, and the farming utensils, enough, whether you retain or dispose of them, to set you up in one of the best farms in the county. All was left, I know, to you and your mother. Surely you have not, since your father's death, involved yourself in such debt as to render this change of situation necessary?"

"I owe no man a farthing, sir," replied Maurice, with some pride of accent and manner: then, catching the kindly glance of his landlord, he continued, mildly and respectfully, "Everything was left to my mother and myself; but, either by accident or design—I believe—I am sure by accident—the will is so worded, that although, in case of our continuing at the Linden Farm, the stock and property of every sort was to remain for my use, upon paying a small annuity to my mother, yet, if we removed, it appears that the

whole is to be sold ; the money to be invested in three per cents, and not to be touched either by her or me until her death—neither of us receiving any benefit from this sum beyond the yearly payment of her annuity—which Heaven grant may continue for many years !”

“ This is new to me, Maurice, and strange as well as new. Who is the executor ? ”

“ Mr. Stephen Elliott, my uncle.”

“ Humph!—your uncle ? Have you seen the will ? Has any lawyer seen it ? Your uncle, Mr. Stephen Elliott, is the executor, you say ? Is the will in your father’s hand-writing ? ”

“ No, sir ; in that of Mr. Ball.”

“ The little pettifogging lawyer, of Bewley—a man thirty miles off—Stephen Elliott’s factotum : I thought so. Well, we must get some one learned in the law to look it over. Not to touch the money until after your mother’s death ! That could never have been the design of the testator, however well it might meet the views of——. This must be looked to, Maurice : send me a copy of the will.”

“ You are very good, sir,” replied Maurice, firmly ; “ but, with all gratitude for your kindness, I have made up my mind to let the matter rest. Firmly as I believe that my father did not contemplate this state of things—that he never dreamt of our leaving the Linden Farm, it is

nevertheless so set down ; and there is something in contesting the last will of a parent which I cannot endure. Besides, we shall do very well. My mother will have the comforts to which she has been accustomed, if my labor can provide them ; and it will be better for me to be a working-man. I was getting to like sporting better than farming. Phœbe said so, sir, as well as you. But now all that is out of the question. I can work, as I have proved to her ; and, with her for a companion and a reward, I shall be a better and a happier man at the Moors than I should have been in our old house, well as I love it."

" Better and happier perhaps than you might have been, had this not occurred," replied Colonel Lisle, grasping his young tenant's hand with a pressure full of heart ; " but not better or happier than you will be there now. The new lease shall be made out to-morrow. Your uncle, for views of his own, and in revenge for your refusal of his daughter, represented you to me as dissipated, idle, extravagant, and careless of all except the caprice of the hour. He even contrived to turn your love for Phœbe into a proof of the lowness of your mind and degradation of your habits. Under this view I sent the notice, fully intending however, especially after I found that he wanted the farm, to examine more closely into the facts. I ought to have looked into the matter at once ;

but I can hardly regret not having done so, since the experiment has not only made your character better known to me, but to yourself. And now you must introduce me to Phœbe! There she stands, looking at us;—no! now that she sees that we are looking at her, she turns away, blushing. But that is Phœbe!—I should know the fresh innocent smile among a thousand.”

And, as a lover of all justice—even that shadowy justice called poetical, which is the branch over which we poor authors have most control—I must add, that, whilst Phœbe’s smiles grew sweeter and sweeter as her blushes deepened, Stephen Elliott, the rich and purse-proud uncle, who had crept stealthily within hearing of the conversation, and felt himself detected and defeated, slunk away, hanging down his head, pale with impotent malice, and muttering ineffectual curses, the most contemned and miserable wretch of that large assembly.

## THE STATION: AN IRISH SKETCH.

BY T. KEIGHTLEY, ESQ.

THERE is, at least there was in my younger days, in the county of Kildare, in Ireland, an old castle called Blackhall, one of those parallelogrammatical strong holds so numerous in that at all times unsettled country. Blackhall has been for many years unroofed and unwindowed, and its only tenants are pigeons and jackdaws, and of course sparrows; but, at right angles with it, runs a long low farm-house, and behind both is a large haggard, fenced in by a hedge, and flowed round by a stream. The castle and its appendages stand on the right-hand side of the road as you go to the mountains, and opposite to it, on the other side of the road, are some high banks of sand, covered with a thin turf, plentifully peopled by numerous colonies of rabbits.

The farm-house was the abode of as uncouth a set of mortals as ever Ireland produced. They were a family of the name of Beaghan, consisting of four brothers, Morris, Hugh, Jack, and Simon, and an only sister named Polsh. They held about one hundred and fifty acres of the lands of Blackhall, which they farmed after most

barbarous fashion, getting about one third of the produce which the lands would yield under any decent system of culture. Some years, however, before the time I am about to speak of, Simon had left the society, and, after the manner of other men, (Irishmen I mean,) had taken unto himself a wife : and let Malthus and Bentham say what they will, it is astonishing what a difference marriage will sometimes make in a man, and that for the better, too ; for when I knew the Beaghans, neither Morris, nor Hugh, nor Jack, was fit to tie the thongs of Simon's pumps, and yet originally, I am told, he had not been a whit better than the rest of them. As to Polsh, gentle reader, the following story will give you some insight into her character.

I have been thus minute in describing the Beaghans, and their residence ; for when, in my thirteenth year, I first began to carry a gun, Blackhall was the scene of my shooting exploits, and many a tough combat used I to have with Morris, or one of his brothers, about shooting the pigeons or the rabbits. My plan was to make my foot-page, Johnny Stykes, steal into the old castle, and pelt out the pigeons. Johnny, then, would throw and shout, the pigeons would rise in a cloud, I would let fly, out Polsh would run to the barn, or haggard, to give the alarm. Mean-time I had reloaded, and got my follower armed

with stones behind me. One of the brothers would soon make his appearance, and tell me how the *agent* (the great man on an Irish estate) had desired them to let no one shoot on the lands. I would reply, that I did not care for him, or the agent. Then Morris would threaten my father on me. I would threaten to shoot Morris; and so we would battle it away for half an hour. It is a strange perversity in human nature, but I preferred shooting one pigeon or rabbit at Black-hall, to a bagful elsewhere. It is odd, too, that though the last-named quadrupeds destroyed at least an acre of corn every year, the churls were as precious of them as they were of the pigeons, that were really profitable to them. Nay, I could not even take a shot at the sparrows in the haggard-hedge, without a conflict with these dogs in the manger. But it was a great triumph to me when I was out shooting with my father, for they were all civility to him, and then I would slap away at pigeons, or sparrows, or what I pleased, before their faces. But I feel I am digressing from my tale, though, in truth, I have but little tale to tell.

The priest of the parish was father Miley. I knew him well, and very fond he was of me, for I loved hunting in my heart, and so did the priest; and I, moreover, (as a country school-master would express it,) took very kindly to my



*larning*, and he would walk or ride through the country with me for the length of a day, and come to dine at my father's, and have me to dine with him in return (a piece of attention, by the way, I never experienced from our own rector, who, provided my father paid his tythes regularly, gave us little trouble on the score of religion; neither did the curate, to whom I had not even the honor of being known,) and, for all that, the idea of converting me never entered the good priest's head. I fancy, somehow or other, that it was my knowledge of him, and some others like him, that has made me such an infidel as I am, on the subject of the horrid villany and hypocrisy of priests. Yet, as wise men say, all things grow worse with time, and priests are not exempted from the common lot; I greatly fear they are not now exactly what they were. However, this again is all palpable digression, for what have I to do but to tell the story of Polsh Beaghan, and her brothers?

Well, then, reader, I suppose you know what a *Station* is; if you do not, as old Herodotus would say, I will tell you. A station, then, is when, at certain seasons, the parish priest intends to hear confessions, and, for the convenience of the people, he makes a sort of progress through his parish—attending now at the house of one, now of another, decent farmer, where the morn-

ing is devoted to spiritual exercises, and the evening to festivity, at which, it is not to be denied, the priest occasionally takes a drop too much; for, as a friend of mine once said, in excuse of the inebriety of priests, what other comfort have the poor men? This is called holding a station, and the station is always given out from the altar on the preceding Sunday, that the people may know where to go, and the favored host have time to lay in his stock of meat and drink.

Year after year the stations were held at Tom Dannelly's, Jack Keogh's, Cormac Maley's, Simon Beaghan's, &c., &c., high and low; but no one ever heard the name of Morris Beaghan sound from the altar, except in the way of reprimand for being behindhand with his dues. The true reason, I believe—indeed, I may say, I know it, for he told it to me himself—was, that the delicate priest fought rather shy of the Blackhall pigsty. At last, either thinking that he was not acting with perfect justice towards such respectable parishioners, or—or—or—I might, like Dr. Johnson, and other great writers, go on assigning twenty ingenious reasons; but the simplest way, I believe, is to give the one the man himself gave, for he told me, it was to punish the *negers*, and break their hearts at being forced to buy some fresh meat and whisky. At any

rate, to the amazement of all present, the station was given out for the following Thursday at Blackhall.

Polsh, though but an unfrequent worshipper, was at mass that day, and it is hard to say whether she felt more joy or sorrow at the sounds. Her pride or her vanity—for remember Polsh was a woman—was flattered at the idea of the priest coming under her roof to be feasted. “And I’ll give him,” says Polsh, “a real *raking* pot of *tay*, such as he never saw the like of.—But, *thunder and ounds*,” cried she, again, as she went along, “then we must have a big dinner, and we must *ax* people to meet the priest; and there’s that big *baste*, long Paddy Gallagher, we can’t with any decency, get over axing him, and he’ll eat as much as any *tin* when he gets the victuals for nothing, and give a body no thanks for it neither; and then they’ll be all for getting drunk any how, bad luck to them! Och! sure but it will be the ruin of us all entirely to slash away such a load of money upon them. But any how I’ll give the priest the *tay*.”

When Polsh got home, and informed her brothers of the honor they were to have, their countenances fell; but as the thing must be done, they resolved to do it *dacently*, as they called it. “So, boys,” says Morris, “we’ll clean away the dung from afore the door, and make a *passage*

for the priest to ride up to the house : and Niddy, *agrah*, (to a little boy,) you'll be sure, on Thursday morning, to shut the pigs up fast in the *ould* castle, that they may not be coming in on the *flure* among us while we're eating ; and, *ahudh*, you'll try if you can get up, without breaking your neck, to the holes in the walls, where the young pigeons are ; 'tis they, sure, will be the sweet *tinder* eating for his reverence."

" But won't we have something else ?" says Polsh.

" Why, then, to be sure, we will," says Hugh. " Do you think we're such *omedhauns* as to go feed them all on young pigeons ? But, any how, boys, we must not feed them too well, or, may be, the priest would be for coming every year."

After a good deal of debate it was agreed to send over in the morning for Simon, who was used to these things, and get his advice about arranging the dinner ; and then Polsh brought forward her motion respecting the tea, showing why it was expedient, for the honor of herself as mistress of the house, to give the priest a good pot of tea. She hardly had uttered the fatal word *tay*, when Jack, the greatest *neger* of the set, who had been sitting silent and thoughtful, nodding over the fire, cried out in a rage, "*Tay*, you —— !" and threw himself back in his stool to battle it with Polsh ; but with the sudden vio-

lence of the motion, as the stool, like Andrew Fairservice's sprightly nag, had one leg suspended in the air, the off hind-leg went down into one of the holes in the floor, out of which the ducks used to drink, and poor Jack came sprawling. His left foot upset the pot of potatoes that was on the fire over the cat and the dog, who were lying asleep together quite cozily, dreaming of no such evil; his head came a-top of one of a litter of young pigs that happened at that moment to be foraging about: *week! week! week! week! week!* cried little piggy. *Hongh! hongh!* grunted the old sow; and helter-skelter, over the prostrate carcass of poor Jack, went the mother and fourteen young ones in their way to the door.

This accident put an end to the dispute; but Polsh secretly resolved to have the tea. So that evening she held a *talk* with Madge Murrin, who was agent and carrier-general to all the good women of the neighborhood, and could turn the potatoes, oatmeal and corn, they cribbed from their husbands, into tea and sugar for them, with all due despatch and secrecy.

Accordingly next morning, by the time the brothers were gone to their work, Madge came to the castle, and Polsh led her out to the barn, where there was a heap of winnowed wheat lying on the floor. The sacks, unfortunately, were all from home. Polsh did not know what

to do ; an apron, or a *praskeen*,\* would not hold enough. At last she thought of her other undergarment ; she fetched it out, stitched up the neck and ends of the sleeves, filled it with the wheat, and placed it upon Madge's back, who drew the tail of her gown up over it, and trudged off to the market of Naas.

Madge was not long about disposing of her cargo of wheat. A baker bought it, and, being in a hurry, he put it sitting on a chair in his parlor, which it occupied in great state, with its two thick little arms stretched out at full length. Just then the baker's wife happened to come into the room, and as the room was rather dark, and the wheat-sack was behind the door, she did not perceive it at first ; but when at last it caught her eye, she deemed it some supernatural monster, gave a yell of affright, shrieked for help, and concluded by falling in a dead faint down on the floor, where the men found her when they ran in from the shop and bakehouse. Meanwhile Madge had completed her purchases, and in the evening she delivered them safe into the hands of Polsh Beaghan.

That same evening Simon and his wife came over to the castle. They did not require to be informed of what was to take place, for the news had run like wildfire through the parish. These

\* A very coarse kind of apron.

experienced personages were not long about arranging the dinner; and, to do the Blackhall people justice, they gave them *carte blanche*. Among other things Simon said a corned round of beef was absolutely necessary. Now as you cannot in Ireland get meat ready salted as you can here, you may wonder, perhaps, where the corned beef was to come from. So I will give you a receipt that I fancy you will not find in Mrs. Glasse, or Dr. Kitchener either, which it is not unlikely you may think worth knowing, and thank me for. Salt and water you know, of course, have a wonderful *penchant*, chemically ycleped affinity, for each other. Get, therefore, a tub of pure water, rain or river water is best, let it be nearly full, and put the tongs, or two pieces of thin wood across it, and set your beef on them distant about an inch from the water; heap as much salt as it will hold on your beef, let it stand for four and twenty hours, you may then take it off and boil it, and you will find it as salt as if it had been in pickle for six weeks.

When the dinner was agreed on, Polsh took her sister-in-law into the room to consult her about the tea; and Mrs. Beaghan gave her opinion, that it would be quite disgraceful to send the priest away without his tea, and promised to smuggle over the equipage (for poor Polsh had none) unknown to Jack the *neger*.

Thursday morning at length came. The beef was bought and corned, and Neddy had got the young pigeons without damaging his cervical vertebræ. And now, had I the style and the imagination of the author of "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," how might I not describe the beauties of morning, and the majesty of mountains, and the fragrance of meadows, and the magic of light, and the charms and the innocence of the peasant girls, and the primitive piety of the priest, and idealize Polsh and her brethren : and lay the realms of ideas and of association under contribution, to contrast the former state of the castle, in troubled times, when peopled with warriors, with its present pacific task—of keeping the pigs which the faithful Neddy had enclosed within its massive walls ! But alas ! I am not gifted with imagination ; I cannot pour the light of poetry over Blackhall, its tenants, and its guests, I can only narrate things just as they were—in all their nakedness and rudeness.

Thursday morning came ; and a more fully attended station never was yet, for every one was curious to see how things were managed at Blackhall. It was quite a holiday, I remember, at my father's, for every one of the men was off to his duty, with his shilling in his pocket. It was a busy but a profitable day with the good priest. Confessions of all lengths, and of all



degrees, were made, and penances of every variety imposed. Little boys acknowledged the theft of apples and eggs ; maid-servants that of tea and sugar ; charges of cursing and swearing were pretty generally pleaded guilty to ; some made short work of the business, by saying they had committed every sin but murder ; servants in Protestant families confessed having given way to the sin that so easily besets them in such places, and to have eaten meat on fast-days. Among the last class of offenders was Betty Whelan, my brother's nurse ; and she was sentenced to go, for six Sundays running, to mass with an empty stomach ; and a hard penance it was upon poor Betty, who loved her breakfast dearly, and I remember well how she used to groan when the fast-Sundays came. However, when Betty had made a clean breast of it, as they call it, she put her hand into her pocket, took out her silver shilling, and handed it to the priest. Now that is a sort of simony, it seems. " How dare you offer me money ? " said the priest, with a frown, pointing all the while to the table, where the better informed had deposited their offerings ; but Betty was too simple and too confused to take the hint : she put her shilling back into her pocket, and hurried out of the room. The priest was ashamed to call her back ; he lost his shil-

ling, and Betty had the rare good fortune to be confessed and absolved for nothing.

Some say confession is a good thing, some say it is a bad thing ; for my part, I say with Sganarelle, "*que oui et que non.*" But this I know, that the general belief of the Irish peasantry is, that when they have made confession, and got absolution from the priest, they are as free from sin as the newly christened babe, or, as Tom Doyle, one of our workmen, once explained it to me ;—" You see, Master Thomas," said Tom, " it's just like when a *gossoon*, like yourself, that's going to school, covers his slate all over with figures when he's working his sum ; and then, when the master looks over it, he spits upon it, and takes a *hould* of the cuff of his coat, and rubs it all out, and then there's a slate for you as clean as if there never was anything on it." There are, however, plenty of people, who know more about such things than either Tom Doyle or I, to argue for and against confession. I have other fish to fry, and I must hasten away to the kitchen.

Simon's wife was there to assist Polsh ; and so, too, was Molly Mulreany, who had lived cook in several families, and who boasted that she could even make turtle soup ; and the dinner was well cooked and well served up. At these station dinners the priest usually takes the head of the table ; yet I have known farmers, such as Tom

Fagan, for instance, who would not give up the head of their table to the Bishop himself; but Morris Beaghan was not one of these. The task therefore, of carving, or rather cutting up the beef, fell to the priest; and little to be envied he was, for, if I recollect right, one of the supreme "Miseries of Human Life" is that of carving a round of beef with a short blunt knife, every one calling on you, and begging you to cut it thin. The latter part of the misery, however, the priest escaped; and he *junked* it up gloriously. Paddy Gallagher was there, and, as you may suppose, he verified all the fears of Polsh; the others were no mean performers; but there is no necessity for my describing the dinner minutely. I have already, in the "Harvest Dinner," which, of course, you have read, in that pic-nic called the "Irish Fairy Legends," described how the Irish eat and drink; so, "I pray you, have me excused."

The dinner was over, and the jug of punch was just laid upon the table *skreeching* hot. Neddy had set a basketful of the potato-skins out on the dunghill, intending to throw them to the pigs when he had time. They caught the nose and the eye of the captives in the "donjon-tower," who grunted their complaints through the bars of the hatch that confined them, unheeded by the unfeeling Neddy. At last porcine flesh and blood could stand it no longer; the big black

boar made a run at the hatch, and tumbled it down. Forth rushed boar, and sow, and *slip*, and sucking pig. The contents of the basket soon disappeared, and then, just as Morris had predicted, they came full charge in about the *flure*; one ran here, another ran there; one was kicked, another was thumped. "Put them out, you devil's-limb, you," cried the priest to Neddy. — "*Hurrish! hurrish! hurrish a muc!*" shouted Neddy, flinging a parcel of skins out before the door. At the well-known signal, the whole troop scampered away for the door, and one impatient devil took the straight road under the tables. One of these happening to have cross-bars under it, he got entangled in them, and capsized it. As ill-luck would have it, this was the table the jug of punch was on, which was clean upset into the lap of Darby Doran, upon his bran. new corduroy breeches, to the no small consternation of the good woman that owned him. Up sprang Darby, swearing he was destroyed, and jumped about the floor, holding the corduroy out from his skin. The fall of the canopy at the banquet of Nasidienus, or the similar event at Guildhall, was nothing to the fall of the punch-jug.

At last Darby's *inexpressibles* cooled, the pigs were once more shut up, the tables set to rights, and the evening was passing away pleasantly and happily. The priest had got about him

Simon and Morris Beaghan; Morris Connor, who lived in the big house of Punchestown, where the *ould* Lord Allen (of whom I could tell many a queer story) used to live, *sic transit gloria mundi*! Darby Doran, and a few others. And they were chatting comfortably of this and of that, of the war, of the price of wheat and butter, of the new road that was to be cut through Darby's ground, of the race at the Curragh between the *Pandreen* mare and Black-and-all-Black, and of various other important matters,—when Neddy came behind the priest, and jogged his shoulder. “What is it *avic*?” said the priest.—“Sir,” says Neddy, with his best bow, “Polsh bid me *ax* you if your reverence would not be pleased to take a cup of tea afore you go?” No language could depict the amazement and vexation that appeared in the countenance of Jack Beaghan, whose heart even whisky-punch could not open, when he heard these words. “Certainly, my lad,” said the priest, getting up and following him to the room, while a mischievous little fellow, named Johnny Lennon, who had been at sea, kept egging Jack on to some deed of vengeance, by telling him of Madge Murrin's journey to Naas.

Simon's wife had forgotten to bring spoons, and Polsh had none. The tea was in one conical bag, and the sugar in another: she stuck one in

each side of her bosom, and extracted their contents with her fingers, and her mode of pouring out tea was this. I suppose, reader, you have, like myself, often stood gazing at a *jet d'eau* in the Temple, at Hampton Court, or elsewhere, and marked how the aqueous column would sometimes fall almost down to the level of the water, sometimes rise, till you would think it was going to out-top the trees,—even so did Polsh play off her teapot: now raising it aloft, then lowering it to the edge of the cups; and still, as she gazed on the bright brown tea-column, she called out in admiration, “Isn’t that fine *tay*, Father Miley? Isn’t that fine *tay*, Father Miley?”

Tea was over, the priest and most of the company were gone, when Jack, followed by Johnny Lennon, came into the room. Jack fell on Polsh, who defended herself, stoutly backed by Simon’s wife and Molly Mulreany. The women were too many for Jack at the tongue; he lost his temper, and caught up a stick, and demolished the *tay-tackle*, as he irreverently termed Mrs. Beaghan’s tea-equipage. Then came the tug of war. “You *neger*! you black *neger* you! You vagabond, that would skin a flea for the hide and fat! You dirty *spalpeen*, that has not a heart big enough to make a tarpaulin for the ace o’ hearts!” and similar elegant figures of rhetoric, poured in a torrent from the lips of Mrs. Beaghan, who

was with difficulty appeased, by every one reminding her that Jack "never was good, egg nor bird," that "you can't get milk from a paving-stone," or "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," and such like consolatory expressions. So at last the storm blew over.

So ended the station dinner. But it was near proving a dear dinner to Johnny Lennon, for Polsh took a strong hatred to him. And, reader, if you like this sketch, I may next year, if I live, tell you how Johnny was tried before the great Lord Norbury, for robbing the Beaghans; and how Polsh swore hard against him; and how Johnny, though innocent, had liked to be hanged; with sundry other strange events.

#### L'ENVOY.

Go, little tale, and say, reader, beware that thou take not me for a picture of the general character and habits of Irish farmers: the Beaghans were *sui generis*, and resembled no others. I have been writing to exhilarate thee, and thereby promote thy health—for what saith the old saw? "Laugh and be fat:" and to instruct thee in the nature of a station, and other things, with which, peradventure, thou hast been hitherto unacquainted.

## THE STOLEN PIECE OF LINEN.

BY S. A.

WE all may remember the wonderful stir and bustle excited in Ireland a few short years ago on the subject of Irish manufactures: much was talked and very much promised, and some present employment and temporary relief followed this ephemeral revival of industry; but like another more recent and happier movement, it soon became suspected of bearing a political tendency; the vain-glorious boasted, the narrow-hearted trembled, as each imagined the effort intended to coerce English influence and cripple English resources; and vain and ridiculous as the idea may now appear, there were not wanting shrewd heads to calculate the amount of injury to be inflicted on our elder sister by rejecting the work of her hands for the sake of the manufactures of the Emerald Isle.

It were needless now to expatiate on the absurdity of an idea which soon lost its most sanguine supporters; and yet when we look back on this effort, we cannot but regret that its untrained and desultory energy should have collapsed into



lifelessness, into nearly a total abandonment of individual exertion in home manufacture; that Irish men and women should be tempted by the gay colors and low prices of the flimsy articles which are now brought within the reach of the remotest, within the means of the poorest, and have superseded the coarser but far more-enduring fabrics, the stout, tough bandle-linen, the warm, rain-defying frieze, and the bright-green or scarlet stuff-petticoat, which formed the clothing of the peasantry, and gave life, interest, and occupation to the hours of the female portion of the community in our younger days.

Our younger days,—not alone amongst the peasantry, but high up into the better ranks in those good old times, spread the ambition of producing and using home manufactures; and deficient indeed would that lady be deemed in the then necessary arts of housekeeping, however else excellent, who could not at the end of the year exhibit in many a needful article, the varied produce of spinning-wheel and loom; and thus, by example as well as precept, encourage her dependants to do likewise.

It was our fortune, in the days we allude to, to spend some time with a kind and valued relative, who, in addition to many an acquirement, many an endowment of heart and mind, added yet more that distinguishing trait of a “virtuous woman,”

“ she sought wool and flax, and worked willingly with her hands.” The day of our arrival was marked by another hardly less interesting : a piece of fine linen, which had for months, in its various stages, engaged the time and attention of the family, had just been brought home from the weaver, and was unanimously pronounced in excellence surpassing any piece which had ever come or gone before.

A family council was held as to its destination and distribution ; each member's wants and claims discussed ; many an unreasonable demand, laughingly or saucily made by the junior aspirants, just as good-humoredly met or rejected by the kind distributor, until at length all was fairly settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. But then another discussion arose ; the younger ones were for sending their property at once to the public bleach-green, where alone, they contended, it could be properly whitened and dressed for use ; but the sage and experienced mother made an eloquent speech in favor of home-bleaching, brought many an instance of pieces injured and soon wearing out, spoke darkly of vitriol and other deleterious processes, and finally wound up her objections by mentioning the fact of a paper-mill having been lately established by the proprietors of the bleach-green, for no other purpose, she argued, than to take advantage of the pulp

and the substance which would infallibly be squeezed out of every piece intrusted to their care.

The last argument was unanswerable ; it carried the day, and without one dissentient voice, consent was given that this piece of joint property should undergo its final operations at home under the personal inspection of its owners. Accordingly, the following day, without further loss of time, it was laid along by the bank of a limpid stream which flowed through the lawn near the house, carefully pinned down to the grass by loops at the sides, and commanded from all the windows, so that neither harm nor mischance could befall it unawares.

For many a week there it lay, coming gradually to perfection by a process slow but sure ; the summer sun brightly shone on it through the day, the dews fell softly over it by night, and many a run had the bright-haired children down to the little stream, delighted with permission to dabble in the water, and pour it over the piece when it became too suddenly dried up. At length it seemed the force of bleaching could no further go, and one week more of free air and sunshine was considered the very utmost requisite to bring it to perfection, when early one morning a sound of lamentation echoed through the house ; abrupt sentences, in which the words

“ Piece of linen ! ” — “ Thieves ! ” — “ Stolen ! ” — confusedly mingled, reached and roused the sleepers ; one simultaneous rush to the windows was succeeded by looks of blank dismay, for no snowy stripe bordered the margin of the little stream : in monotonous and unbroken verdure the lawn descended to the water’s edge ; in fact the *piece was gone* — absent without leave — stolen by some thievish prowler during the night.

’T were vain to attempt a description of the indignation and regrets which followed. To their credit, however, be it spoken, nobody uttered the portentous phrase, “ I told you so ; ” that ungracious, though common little sentence, was left unspoken, though fairly earned by poor Mrs. Carr’s mistaken management ; but she so frankly blamed herself for her advice and suspicions about the bleach-green, that cold indeed would have been the disposition which could have added reproaches to her own.

In silence and disappointment the little party assembled in the breakfast parlor, the windows of which looked on the scene of their loss, and as they sat round their table, their downcast eyes, resting on the snowy cloth, received but little comfort, as that more fortunate specimen of home manufacture reminded them of its luckless successor.

A week passed by : every exertion had been

made in vain ; no tidings of the missing article ; and the whole family were beginning to try and forget it, or reconcile themselves philosophically to its loss, when one morning, at breakfast, Mrs. Carr suddenly desisted from the operation of pouring out tea, and looking round the circle, very gravely said, " I am sure you will all be surprised, and perhaps laugh at what I say, but I dreamed last night the piece was found ; I know the exact spot, and am convinced it is there."

The younger children looked wonderingly at a speech so unlike their mother ; some of the elder ones did laugh, but only for a moment, and their father replied in a lively tone, " Why, Mary, you have taken the loss of that piece so much to heart, that I believe you are dreaming of it not only by night but by day also ; but think no more about it," added he, affectionately. " I believe I am the chief loser, as I was to have had a new set of shirts, and I will promise to manage very well with those I have until another year comes round." Mrs. Carr's gentle eyes silently thanked her husband, but she persisted in her statement, and desired her eldest boy to run off as far as the well in the grove, and behind the little ruined wall, if he did not find the linen, she would never set up for a dreamer again.

The boy, half laughingly, as if merely to gratify her, obeyed ; and during the interval of his

absence, in spite of all their incredulity, a sort of still suspense stole over the rest ; soon, however, interrupted by a shout announcing his return ; another and another followed, each eloquent of success, and the whole party, rushing with one accord from the breakfast-room, beheld him bounding along with triumphant looks, bearing the heavy burden, as if it were but a feather in his hands.

Many an expression of wondering surprise, many a random guess followed this discovery. Mr. Carr turned an inquiring glance on his wife ; but the grave expression before noticed had returned to her countenance ; it might, perhaps, have been that of awe at the realizing of her vision ; but, at any rate, it seemed to say, " I will not be questioned ;" so shaking his head with a mysterious smile, he reëntered the house, and quietly finished his breakfast.

Before long, as may be imagined, the fame of Mrs. Carr's dream spread far and near ; it was regarded as little short of a miracle, and won for her the respectful and somewhat superstitious deference of the credulous peasantry in her neighborhood ; she, meanwhile unconscious, or unwitting of this claim on public veneration, quiet and unpretending as ever, pursued the noiseless tenor of her way.

The summer holidays passed away ; and when

mirthful, joyous Christmas came round, it found us once again domesticated within that dear and social home. Many a preparation ushered in the festival,—light the burden of the voluntary tasks eagerly undertaken by all.

Our lot was to assist in the arrangement of sundry articles of comfortable clothing for distribution amongst the laborers and neighboring poor, and we had nearly finished the assortment, and labelled each different parcel with the owner's name, when Mrs. Carr entered the room with a small basket in her hand, and addressing one of the busy group, desired to have Nora Sullivan's name written on a card and fastened to the handle.

"Nora Sullivan, mamma!" echoed one of the girls in a tone of surprise. "What on earth can you have to send to her? I didn't think you would give any encouragement to that set?"

"They are bad enough, truly," replied Mrs. Carr; "but Nora is not like them; she is a dove out of a raven's nest."

"*A rara avis!*" cried Harry, though it was in the holidays; but unheeding the interruption, Mrs. Carr continued, "Ask me no questions now, for I have reasons which I cannot for a while explain."

"In the mean time, mamma, is it any harm to take a peep into the basket?"

“Not the least in the world, provided you do not tumble the contents, or say a word about them until I give you leave.”

With these words Mrs. Carr left the room; and as may be imagined, we were not slow in availing ourselves of the permission. Elinor Carr raised the lid of the basket, and peeping in with an exclamation of surprise, opened it wider, and drew forth, first a neat little cap faithfully trimmed with white satin-riband, then a muslin apron embroidered and frilled all round; and, last of all, a handsome dress of chintz, such as was then worn, with bright flowers of every hue strewn all over a white ground.

“What in the world can mamma mean?” cried one and all.

“This is actually a bride’s *trousseau*!” exclaimed Elinor; “and now I do remember mamma’s working at it during the autumn, and never telling us what she was about. What fancy can she have taken to Nora Sullivan?”

“Nora Sullivan!” repeated one of the little boys, who had been indulgently admitted to twine the parcels and to do other clumsy jobs, “Nora, why she is going to be married to our Brian, as soon as Advent is over!”

“Well, no good in saying or guessing any more now,” said quiet Mary. “Mamma told us we should hear all when she wished, and we



must wait until then." So, obliged to be content with this assurance, the mysterious articles were replaced in the basket, the direction written, and its place allotted for distribution among its more humble companions.

We were all gathered round the fire a few nights after the foregoing, and noisy as youthful joyous spirits well may be, when Mrs. Carr took advantage of a sudden lull in the conversation, if such our running fire of mirth could be called, to inquire if we still felt any curiosity about the basket, the contents of which had been viewed with such suspicious glances on Christmas-eve. All eyes were immediately turned on her, every voice unanimous in requesting the promised explanation. Mr. Carr stirred the fire to throw an additional light on the subject, and the good lady of the house thus began :—

" You may remember last summer, the time our piece of linen was stolen ;"—a ready assent from all interrupted the thread of the narrative, and Mrs. Carr had to recommence, first deprecating any further comments. " Well, as you all may recollect also, I was very much annoyed, and, indeed, mortified at my loss. I did not think there was a being in the country who would have treated me so badly, and I feared that for the future we could never again feel anything like security in the honesty of the

neighborhood. I walked out one evening quite alone, thinking very much of these things, and followed the pathway along into the little wood, until I came opposite the ruined wall that used to cover the old well. Here my attention was arrested by a rustling sound amongst the shrubs, and as I looked to discover the cause, they were parted asunder, and out crept a young girl, fair, but very pale, and seemingly under the influence of extreme agitation. As I looked at her, even at that distance, I could perceive that she trembled violently, but, apparently making an effort at composure, she slowly advanced a few steps, and sinking on her knees before me, bent down her head, sobbing bitterly and wringing her hands. You may imagine I could not unmoved behold such distress, and tried all in my power to reassure her, inquiring what could ail her and who she was? My last question was easiest answered; she faltered out that her name was Nora Sullivan, and I then remembered the little blue-eyed girl, who, two or three years ago, used to come here with eggs, until we heard bad stories of her family, and desired her not to come any more. She was, however, grown so much, and her round laughing face looked so different in sorrow, that I found some difficulty in persuading myself she could be the same.

“This slight pause gave her some courage,

and putting aside her hair with her still shaking hands, she hurriedly went on to say, that she had been for some time engaged to Brian, our undergardener, 'as good a boy as ever lived;' that he had had misgivings on account of her family; 'but, ma'am,' continued Nora, with a deeper flush, 'he found I was not like them, and at last everything was settled between us for our marriage: I worked early and late to get together a little money to buy myself some decent coverin, not to disgrace him when he'd carry me home, for little I had to expect from father or mother; so when I had just enough, mother was going to town one day, and she offered to lay it out for me, and buy whatever I'd want: I would rather have done it myself, but I did n't like to cross her; and besides, Brian promised to be over in the course of the evening to settle about the day, and I did n't wish to be out before him, so she went away. I'm tiring yer honor; but, oh! if you could only know the shame and sorrow I have yet to tell, you would not wonder that my heart was dry, and my story slow. Brian came, but not with the bright, contented look he always gave me; his eyes were cast down as if he was afraid to look me in the face. I thought not of myself, for my mind was clear, but my heart misgave me that he had come to harm, and for his sake I was afraid to ask; before I could

speaking he turned on me very sharp like, and asked which was it, my father or my mother did the mischief at the great house? I knew at once what he meant, and his voice and look, oh! so strange, went through me like a dagger, and I burst into fits of crying; he thought them tears of guilt, and flinging himself on his bended knees, thanked God that he had no part in me, and that his eyes were opened before it was too late to part from me forever. After this he grew calmer as he stood up, and looked at me, sorrowful like, and my heart that had been fluttering with fright, grew cold and still; we stopped a minute or so, looking at one another. Well we might, when 't was the last, the last time our eyes would ever meet; and then without a word he turned away, and left the house: he was gone before I could speak; gone without listening to me, who never told him the untrue word; but my tongue was chained; my spirit failed me, and when I got up to follow him I fell upon the floor.

“ ‘ When I sat up again it was growing dusk, and I tried to remember everything, though I felt very wild, but my foremost thought was to get back the linen. I knew he must have reason for what he said, and shame and sorrow was enough to bear without adding sin. I searched every bit of the house, though I dreaded that my mother had taken it to town; but at last I noticed

the big chest shoved out from the wall, and looking underneath, I found the piece was lying there. To my joy I found it; to my joy, though my heart was breaking: but from the time he said it, no doubt, no hope that he might be wronging us, entered my heart, and I had at least the joy of making up to yer honor for the harm that was done; I moved the chest as well as I was able, took out the linen and hid it in the turf-rick. When mother came home she missed it, and beat me; but I would tell her nothing, and all the day I'm watching to tell yer honor that if you send in the morning ye'll find it here behind the well. But, oh! mistress,' she continued, again falling on her knees, 'spare our name, spare us, bad as we are; don't sink us intirely, and give it to the neighbors to say, that even the best and kindest could not escape from such as we.'

"Such, as well as I can remember, was poor Nora's story, but it would be impossible for me to describe her heart-broken look, her lowly self-abasement of tone and attitude as she poured out her confession; no doubt of Brian's keeping her secret faithfully seemed to have crossed her mind, but at the same time no ray of hope that he may relent had entered to cheer her. I assured her of my own fidelity, and tried to speak of comfort, but she turned away with a gesture that showed such words were vain; she would nei-

ther accept nor hear of any reward; and I inwardly resolved to use every effort to procure her heart's dearest recompense—a reconciliation with Brian again, and pondering on all this, you will not wonder that in my sleep that night the whole scene was reacted, and that I really did dream the piece was found.

“After its discovery I imagined my task with Brian would have been a light one; but I little knew his sturdy, resolute nature; his feelings had been sorely wrung, his hopes crushed, and he found it next to impossible to heal or renew them. I believe he was apprehensive of my interference, or else felt ashamed of having had any connection with the *traitors*; at least he most studiously avoided me, and so much time at length elapsed before I could bring about an apparently accidental interview, that any one less interested or determined than myself would have forgotten the matter altogether.

“At last I successfully waylaid him as he was cutting the grass in the flower-garden, and finding himself circumvented, he evidently prepared to submit to a lecture of one sort or another. As I approached, he commenced sharpening his scythe most industriously, while his downcast look and heightened color plainly showed his anticipation of something personally interesting. I really cannot help laughing now at the recollec-

tion of my own nervousness, and I believe I was almost as much confused as poor Brian; fortunately, however, he was too much occupied with his own dilemma to notice mine.

"I commenced by saying I had wished for an opportunity to speak to and thank him for the part he had borne in getting my piece restored: he at once deprecated any praise, in a hurried tone which plainly said, 'No more about it;' but I was not to be thus baffled, and went on to speak of Nora, her distress of mind, her sorrow, her excellence, growing more and more eloquent as I perceived the impression I was making, until at last the honest face was turned away, and the rough hand hastily raised to wipe away the tear he would not show. But though his heart was touched, his mind was firm, and, throwing away the scythe, he thanked me warmly in a burst of natural eloquence for all the pains that I had taken, the interest I had felt. 'T was too much to ask me to forgive them, let alone to speak in their favor. But he and his family were always honest people; thank God they escaped, though only a hair's breadth, making one with them born thieves. Oh, mistress!' continued he, 'my heart sunk within me when I thought I read the guilt in her face, and never since has it risen, nor ever will again.'

“ ‘ Ah, Brian,’ I exclaimed, ‘ we ’ll see you with a light heart yet, when all is forgotten and forgiven.’ Brian shook his head ; but remembering the proverb, ‘ silence gives consent,’ I still persevered, and at last got a promise that he would take a fortnight to consider, and then acquaint me with his determination.

“ All this time I kept my eyes on Nora, watching how she bore her disappointment, and now guessing pretty nearly how it would end, I hardly regretted the severe lesson she was receiving as a counterpoise to the evil example she had witnessed from childhood ; still as I occasionally met her in my walks, and saw her meek pale face flush, and light up with a grateful smile as I passed, I could scarcely refrain from whispering some word of comfort to that stricken heart.

“ The second week passed by, and one glance at Brian showed me how our ensuing conference would end. Never did man look more conscious or ashamed, and it needed no words to tell that all his stern resolutions were conquered. But he had decided not only kindly but wisely ; whatever turned out, he had made up his mind to dwell in this country no more. Without Nora he would be miserable ; and with her, even if she forgave all his harshness and consented to marry him, (this was the way now,)



still he could not be happy while she was near her people, for he knew too well, by what was come and gone, that his heart was of a suspicious nature that could never rest content as long as there was any fear of their coming round her; but if Nora could make up her mind to leave them all, and come with him to America, then ——. He said no more, but his sunny countenance showed that that prospect shone without a cloud.

“I was to be his mediator with Nora, as he wished to avoid the trial of parting, or perhaps mistrusted the strength of his resolution in case she rejected his terms, or thought them too severe. I am sure he thought them so himself, though impelled by the necessity of the case; but he little knew poor Nora’s heart—never, never shall I forget the bewildered, incredulous look when she first heard me; the transition from despair to doubt, then on to hope and joy, and then the passionate thanksgiving which she poured forth,—I almost feared she would have fallen down and worshipped me.

“It is needless now to tell what were the contents of the basket or why provided—enough to say, that yesterday the long estranged pair were united, and are by this time on their way to their new country, and I trust their happy home.”

“Then come,” said Mr. Carr, refilling his

**wine-glass, “let us all drink success to you,  
Mary, as a match maker, and a peaceful voyage,  
not only across the Atlantic, but through the  
ocean of life, to the honest gardener and his  
pretty bride.”**

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**THE VILLAGE AMANUENSIS.**

Mitford, M R

*Amaranth, or Token of Remembrance* (1847-1855); 1847; American Periodicals

pg. 36A



*The Village Amanuensis*

# THE VILLAGE AMANUENSIS.

BY M. R. MITFORD.

"Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid."

POPE.

TAP! went a modest, timid, shy-sounding knock against the old-fashioned oaken door of William Marshall's domicile, in the brief twilight of a September evening—the hour of all others in which a pretty young woman might, with the least risk of observation, pay a visit to a handsome bachelor—the best hour to shield her from the attacks of village gossipry, or to cover her own confusion, should her errand be such as to challenge something like a jest on the part of her host.

Tap! tap! again went the slender forefinger; but although the reiterated summons was a thought louder than the first nearly audible demand for admittance, it was equally unsuccessful in arousing the attention of the master of the dwelling.

For this abstraction there was a reason which the young and tender-hearted will admit to be

valid: the poor youth was in love, and to enhance that calamity he had quarrelled with the mistress of his affections.

William Marshall, at the time of which I write, schoolmaster of Aberleigh, the only son of one of the poorest widows in the parish, was a person of great merit. Some quickness and much industry had given him a degree of information and refinement unusual in his station, and his excellent conduct and character had secured the friends whom his talents had attracted. In short he was one of those instances—more frequent than the grumblers of the world are willing to admit—which prove that even in this life desert is pretty certain to meet its reward.

The ancient pedagogue of the village, a man of some learning, who availed himself of the large and airy schoolhouse to add boarders, who aspired to the accomplishments of mathematics and the classics, to the sturdy country lads, whom, by the will of the founder, he was bound to instruct in reading and writing, declared that this his darling scholar caught up, untaught and unflogged, all that he painfully endeavored to instil, by book and birch, into the fortunate pupils whose fathers were rich enough to pay for teaching and whipping; and he followed up this declaration not only by installing him, at the early age of seventeen, into the post of his assist-

ant, but by recommending him so warmly to the trustees as his successor, that at his death, which occurred about six years after, William Marshall, in spite of his youth, was unanimously elected to fill the place of his old master, and took possession of the pretty house upon School Green, with its two noble elms in front, as well as the large garden, orchard and meadow, which the brook, after crossing the green, and being in turn crossed by the road and the old ivied bridge, went cranking round so merrily, clear, bright, and rapid as ever rolled rivulet.

Now this, besides its pleasantness as a residence, formed a position which, considering the difference of the age and times, might be reckoned, for our modest scholar, full as good as the magnificent proffer of the green gown, cow's grass, and four merks a-year, made by the good Abbot Boniface to Halbert Glendinning,\* and by the said Halbert Glendinning, to the unspeakable astonishment and scandal of the assistants, unceremoniously rejected; since, in addition to the stipend paid regularly as quarter-day came round, and the prospect of as many boarders as the house would hold, was the probable contingency of the tax-gathering and rate-collecting, the timber-valuing and land measuring, which usually

\* *Vide* "The Monastery."

falls to the share of the schoolmaster, together with the reversion of the office of parish clerk, provided always, that for a "master of scholars,"\* who taught Latin and Greek and took boarders, such office were not held *infra dig*.

William Marshall's humble wishes were gratified. He was a happy man ; for, in addition to the comfort of having a respectable home for the infirm mother to whom he had always been a most exemplary son, he had the gratification (so at least said the gossips of Aberleigh) of preparing a suitable abode for one of the best and prettiest of our village maidens.

Ever since the days of Pyramus and Thisbe proximity has been known for the friend of love ; and such was probably the case in the present instance, since Lucy Wilmot, the object of William Marshall's passion, was his next neighbor, the brook of which we have made honorable mention being the sole barrier by which her father's meadows were divided from the garden and orchard of the school.

A more beautiful boundary was never seen than that clear babbling stream, which went wandering in and out, at " its own sweet will," with such infinite variety of margin : now fringed with alders, now tufted with hawthorn and hazel,

\* " A scholar, sir ! I was a master of scholars." — *Lingo, in the Agreeable Surprise.*

now rising into a steep bank crowned with a giant oak, flinging its broad arms across the waters, the reflection of its rich indented foliage broken by the frequent dropping of a smooth acorn from its dimpled cup ; now sloping gently down into a verdant bay enameled with flowers of all hues, the intensely blue forget-me-not half-hidden under the light yellow clusters of the cross-leaved bedstraw, while the purple spikes of the willow-herb waved amidst the golden chalices of the loosestrife, and large patches of the feathery meadow-sweet, the heliotrope of the fields, spread its almond-like fragrance and its pale and feathery beauty to the very centre of the stream, overhanging the snowy blossoms of the water-lily as they rose from their deep-green leaves, and mingling with that most remarkable of the many sedges that border our English streams, whose flowers, placed so regularly on either side of their tall stalks, resemble balls of ebony thickly set with ivory spikes. Certainly, of all possible methods of dividing or uniting persons and property, this bright and cheerful stream seemed the most propitious to social intercourse, as William and Lucy found by experience.

The green in front of the school-house formed a commodious natural playground for the children, sufficiently near for safety, and yet wide enough for all their sports, the noble game of



cricket included : so that those sharp little eyes which love so dearly to pry into the weaknesses of their elders, especially when those elders assume the double relation of example and preceptor, were, during the intervals of tuition, happily engaged elsewhere ; and really nobody, except perhaps a lover, would believe how attentive William Marshall became to the cow which was tethered in the orchard, how punctual in culling himself all the fruit and vegetables needed from the garden, how assiduous, above all, in watering his mother's little flower-plot sloping down to the stream ; whilst on her part it was at least equally remarkable how often Lucy Wilmot found cause to fill her pail at the brook, or to feed the ducks, geese, chickens, and turkeys, which she had dislodged from their old home, the farm-yard, to establish by the water-side. Never were poultry so zealously looked after. It happened to be a dry summer ; and it stands upon record at the Brook Farm that Lucy volunteered to fetch all the water wanted for domestic use by the whole family. " To be sure," as their sisters would laughingly observe, " they had sometimes to wait for it, especially if it were towards dinner-time, or before breakfast, or after school broke up." And then Lucy would blush, and declare that she would never go near the place again ; and then, by way of keeping her word, she would take up

her little basket of barley, and run across the meadow to feed her chickens.

Halcyon days were these. What a charming spot for a rural flirtation was that mirror-like stream! What tender words floated across it! What smiles and blushes looked brightly down into the bright waters! And of how many of the small gifts, the graceful homages in which love delights, was that clear brook the witness! From the earliest violet to the latest rose, from the first blushing cherry to the Katherine pear, rich and ruddy as Lucy's own round healthful cheek, not an offering escaped the assiduity of the devoted lover. Halcyon days were these to our friend William, when an affliction befell him in the very scene of his happiness—a shadow fell across the sunshine of his love, so hideous and gloomy as to darken his whole future prospects, to sadden and embitter his very life. Like many other swift and sudden poisons, nothing could be more innocent in appearance than this implement of mischief, which wore the quiet and unoffending form of an unopened letter.

Hovering one day by the side of the stream, waiting with a basket of filberts, "brown as the squirrel whose teeth crack them," as Fletcher has it—filberts firm, juicy and fragrant, the first of the season—waiting until the close of evening should bring his Lucy to tend her poultry under

the great oak—he saw a letter on the grass, and springing from bank to bank on a spot a little higher up, where the brook was sufficiently narrow to admit of this sort of lover's leap, he stooped for the paper, suspecting sooth to say, that it might be some billet-doux of his own, with the design of returning it to the fair owner. His it was not. On the contrary, the epistle was sealed with a pretty device of doves drinking from the same shallow bowl—an imitation of the exquisite doves of the Vatican—which he himself had given to Lucy, his first pledge of love, and directed in her well-known hand to

MR. WILLATTS,  
at the Red Boot,  
Bristol Street,  
Belford.

Well did William Marshall know this Mr. Willatts! Well did he know and heartily did he despise this dandy of the Red Boot, who—slim, civil, and simpering, all rings and chains, smirks and grimaces, curls and essences—skipped about in his secondhand coxcombry, as if the vending of earthly boots and shoes were too gross for so ethereal a personage, and glass-slipper maker to Cinderella were his fitting designation! William always had disliked him, in virtue of the strong antipathy which opposite holds to opposite; and now to see a letter to him directed

by Lucy—his Lucy—sealed too with that seal !  
“ But she would explain it ! of course she would !  
she must, she should explain what motive she  
could have for writing to such a creature as that,  
after confessing her love for him, after all had  
been arranged between her father and himself, and  
everything was prepared for their marriage before  
the ensuing Christmas. He had a right to  
demand an explanation, and ought not to be con-  
tent with anything short of the most ample and  
satisfactory account of the whole matter.”

Just as he had worked himself up to the very  
climax of angry suspicion, his fair mistress, with  
her eyes cast down upon the grass, evidently in  
search of the lost letter, advanced slowly towards  
the spot. She started when she saw him, and  
when he presented the epistle, with a greet-  
ing in the true spirit of the above soliloquy, in  
which a stern and peremptory demand for ex-  
planation was mingled with an ironical and con-  
temptuous congratulation upon the correspon-  
dent whom she had chosen, her answer, between  
confusion at the discovery, indignation at the  
jealousy so openly avowed, and astonishment at  
the high tone taken by one who had hitherto  
shown nothing but the gentlest tenderness, dis-  
played so much displeasure, vexation and embar-  
rassment, that the dialogue grew rapidly into a  
quarrel, and ended in a formal separation between

the lovers. Each party returned home angry and grieved. William most angry, if we may judge from his sending the unlucky filberts, basket and all, floating down the stream; Lucy most grieved, if the crumpled letter and defaced address, so nearly washed out by her tears that it required all the skill and experience of the Belford postmaster to decipher the legend, may be accepted as evidence.

In spite, however, of this token of her fond relenting, the first tidings that William Marshall heard of Lucy were that she had gone on a visit to her godmother twenty miles off. William, on his part, staid at home instructing his pupils as well as he could. In spite of lovers' quarrels the work of the world goes on. To be sure the poor boys wondered why their master, usually so even-tempered, was so difficult to satisfy; and his fond mother could not comprehend why, when she spoke to him, her son, always so mindful of his only remaining parent, answered at cross purposes. But William, although a lover, was a strong-minded man; and before a week had elapsed he had discovered his own infirmity, and had determined to correct it. Accordingly, he opened his desk, took out the map of an estate which he had just finished measuring before the unlucky adventure of the hero of the Red Boot; and having compared his own mensuration of the

different fields with the estimated extent, and completed the necessary calculations, had just relapsed into a reverie when the interruption occurred which formed the beginning of our little story.

Tap! tap! tap! sounded once again, and this time a little impatiently. Tap! tap! tap!

“Ah, my good cousin Kate!” said William, at last admitting the poor damsel, who had waited this unmerciful while at the door, of which detention our lover had, one hardly knows how, a glimmering consciousness; “I hope you have not been long detained! Why did not you knock louder? Do you want my mother? No; or you would not have come to the door of my little room. You want me, Kate, I see. So tell me at once what I can do for you.”

And smiling, blushing, and hesitating, Kate confessed “that she did want her cousin William; that she had a letter——” (William started and winced at the very sound,)—“a letter to write; and she was such a poor scholar, and the friend who used to write her letters was away; so she had come to trouble cousin William.”

“No trouble at all, dear Kate!” replied William, recovering from his confusion, and too much occupied with the recollections awakened by the very name of a letter to observe the em-

barrassment of his pretty visitor; "no trouble at all. Here is my paper ready. Now begin. Is it to your brother in London?"

"Oh, no!" replied the blushing damsel; "not to my brother: to———a friend."

"Very well!" said William. "The days draw in so fast that it will soon be dark. Begin, dear Kate!"

And after a little hesitation, and playing with a folded letter she held in her hand, Kate, in a very low, hesitating voice, began to dictate:

"Dear Francis——"

"Dear Francis," echoed her amanuensis, unsuspectingly, in a still lower tone; then pausing, and looking up as expecting her to proceed.

"Stop!" said Kate; "only that it is wrong to give you the trouble to begin again—but that sounds so formal!"

"I think it does," replied William, dashing his pen rapidly through the words; and the abbreviation is so pretty, too. "There," continued he; "Dear Fanny!—that sounds as well again!"

"Fanny!" exclaimed Kate, half laughing in the midst of her blushes. "Fanny, indeed Why, cousin William!"

And cousin William, awaking immediately to the perception of the true state of the case, dashed out the second beginning as rapidly as he

had done the first, and laughing with a very good grace at his own stupidity, wrote this time in full assurance of being right,—

‘ Dear Frank ! ’

“ Fanny, forsooth ! ” repeated Kate still laughing.

“ Well but, Kate, remember that I had never heard of this friend of yours. To be sure it was very, very stupid. But now shall we go on with the letter ? or may I ask who this Frank ”——

“ Fanny,” interposed Kate archly.

“ Well ! who this Francis is ? Does my good aunt know, dear Kate ? or ”——

“ O yes, dear William ! Mother knows, and father knows, and both like him so much ! It has been kept a secret till now, because his friends are so much better to do in the world than mine ; for he is a tradesman, William, going into partnership with his late master : they are so much richer and grander than father, that we thought they might not like their eldest son to marry a poor working girl. But he said they would only look to good character, and so they say in this letter, and they have consented ; and he told them how you, my own cousin, had got on by your good conduct, William, and how proud he was of knowing you ”——



"I know him, then!" interrupted William, with pleased curiosity.

"Yes, to be sure! Don't you remember our all drinking tea together at Farmer Wilmot's last Sunday was three weeks? Lucy knew it all along."

"Frank! Frank Willatts?" inquired William eagerly. "Was it for you, then, that Lucy wrote that letter?"

"To be sure she did. And were you jealous of her, William? And was that why she went away? Oh, William, William! to be jealous of dear, good Lucy, because she kept my secret! Oh, cousin William!"

But William was too happy to be very penitent, and Kate was too pleased and too busy to dilate upon his offences. She had her letter to dictate, and, with a little help from her willing amanuensis, a very pretty letter it was; and so completely in charity with all the world, especially with the Franks of the world, was this amanuensis, that, before he had finished Kate's epistle, he had written himself into such feelings of good will towards her correspondent as to add a most friendly and cousinly postscript on his own account.

What were the contents of the far more ardent and eloquent letter which William Marshall afterwards wrote, and whether he did or did not

obtain his mistress' pardon for his jealousy, and its fruits, we leave to the imagination of our fair readers. We, for our part, knowing the clemency of the sex, incline to think that he did.

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## THE WIDOW OF ANTWERP.

THOUGH attached by habit and conviction to a simpler form of worship, I have seldom entered a Catholic church without feelings of seriousness and devotion. The imposing pageantry of the ceremonies, the splendid dresses of the priests and choristers, the deep and solemn bass of voices almost as powerful as the instruments that accompany them, the elevated crucifix, the burning tapers, the silver crozier, the censers flung gracefully aloft, the richly decorated altar, produce an effect which the belief that they are merely as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," cannot destroy.

It is not in these, however, that the religion of a Catholic place of worship consists. Kneeling in some retired spot, apart from the sights or sounds that attract the curious or indifferent, female devotion may be seen offering up her prayers, with a fervor that shows her deep feeling of the power and mercy of the Being before whom she bows, and with the humility and abstraction of unaffected piety.

In the frequent visits which the beauty of its architecture induced me to make to the cathedral,

the first time I was at Antwerp, I had often seen a figure of this description, for whom the world around her appeared to have lost all interest. She knelt at the foot of one of the pillars, and, from the earnestness of her manner, all that was yet dear to her seemed involved in the acceptance of her prayers.

Though time and grief had committed their ravages, her face was still interesting, and had that expression of mildness and of suffering, which shows a spirit accustomed to misfortune, and too feeble to support its visitations.

Her countenance daily became paler, and her prayers more earnest : and to gratify the curiosity her appearance had excited, I at length obtained her history from one of the *donneurs d'eau benite*, who had often before answered my inquiries as to the temple of which he was amongst the humblest servants, and of the most remarkable of those who frequented it.

She was the widow of an officer, who died in the service of Napoleon at the commencement of his brilliant career, leaving her with a scanty annuity, and a son and daughter to support and educate. Whatever might have been her weakness, she performed this sacred duty conscientiously, and was gratified by seeing her cares bestowed upon two of the best and kindest dispositions in the world. Her daughter was married,

but died a few months afterwards; and her son was now the only object that made life dear to her.

Yet the life of a mother, in circumstances like these, is but a succession of privations. Her comforts are given up to the expense of her children's education—her feelings must yield to the necessity of parting with them when their interests call them from her. The being in whom all her cares and hopes have centred, to whose affections she has been accustomed to look for a short gleam of brightness before she sinks into the grave, is removed to a distant country, or, perhaps, taken from her forever. In their struggles with the world her anxieties are again renewed, and the path over which she has toiled seems to bring her no nearer to the object of her painful efforts.

It was to the island of Curaçao that the son of this poor widow had been destined by the friends on whose assistance she depended. He had been there for some years, had been successful, and had taken his passage on board a small vessel to visit his native country, and make some provision for the old age of a parent to whom he was sensible how much he owed.

To her this intelligence was a new life. Before the time for the shortest passage that had ever been known had elapsed, she was anxiously

looking out for his arrival, and daily poured her prayers to Heaven for his safety. Weeks were passed in painful suspense: the owners of the vessel in which he was expected began to answer her inquiries with less confidence, and at length partook of her fears as to its fate. In a few days more, accounts were brought of its having foundered in a gale of wind within a week of its departure from Curaçao, and little doubt was entertained that all on board had perished. Still nothing certain was known, and the wretched mother clung to the last hope, and prayed to her God that it might be fulfilled. It was about this time that I first saw her, and shortly afterwards "the composure of settled distress" convinced me that she no longer expected to be united in this world to those she had loved and lost.

I left Antwerp for a few days, and on the evening of my return, while sitting in the *Cafe* where I had dined, I heard a young man at the next table relating some circumstances which seemed listened to by his companions with much interest.

"A sudden flaw of wind," said he, "struck our vessel, and every piece of canvass on board being set, she fell upon her beam ends, and all our exertions to right her were in vain. A heavy gale soon followed, and she filled. Her masts went by the board; and she was prevented from

sinking only by the buoyancy of the cargo, which was just sufficient to keep the quarter-deck above the surface of the water.

“Fearing that she would go to pieces, the captain and crew took to their boat, and promised to drop under the stern for myself and young Kellerman, (you knew Henry Kellerman, the son of old Madame Kellerman, in the Rue de Strasbourg?) By accident or design, however, the boat broke adrift, and the height of the waves soon hid it forever from our sight.

“During the night the sea continued to break over us; and at dawn I perceived that my companion was lying dead by my side. I shrank with horror from the sight, and casting off the lashings that held him to the deck, I repeated a short prayer, and committed his body to the deep.

“Many things floated out of the cabin, but I was only able to secure a fishing line and hook, a jar of spirits, and a few pounds of salted meat. These, however, were invaluable.

“Sharks were now constantly moving round the vessel. I had seen the limbs of poor Kellerman become their prey, and I looked upon them as my own grave. I cried, ‘Great God, have mercy upon me!’ and resigned myself to my fate.

“On the morning of the fifteenth day, I per-

ceived a sail. But she was far off: I was without the means of making a signal, and probably beyond sight.

"In an hour, however, she bore towards me, and soon afterwards she was at such a distance as might have enabled the persons on deck to have seen me. My breast swelled as she drew nearer: I raised myself to be better seen; but she went upon an opposite tack and left me forever.

"A cold horror seemed to steal across my heart: I again sank upon the deck, and burst into tears.

"I remained the whole day and night in a stupor of indifference and despair; and when I recovered myself on the following morning, I found that, to add to my miseries, the hook and a great part of the fishing-line had been carried away. My strength had begun to leave me for some time: but with the perseverance of one who makes a last effort for his existence, I forced a nail from the upper works of the vessel, and with my teeth I bent it to a hook. By means of this I was enabled to support myself for five days longer: but I became dreadfully emaciated; and the spirits, which were my only drink, produced a nausea which was insupportable. One-and-twenty days had thus been past, and the night was fast closing in, when a brig bore down upon



me, and passed so near as to rub against the wreck. They heard and saved me. It was with difficulty I was taken on board ; but my strength gradually returned, and on recovering myself, I found I was on board the Maelstrom, bound for Rotterdam, where I arrived on Monday last."

" You must have passed a fearful time," said one of his companions, " and while left so long in such a situation, what could have occupied your thoughts ?"

" I thought," replied he, " of almost everything that had ever interested me—of my home, of my mother, of Agnes, and of my own future state. Once, incredible as it may appear, some strange combination crossed my fancy, and I laughed aloud ; but, O, God ! I shall never forget the horrid sound of my own voice as it broke upon the awful silence that surrounded me !"

The conversation soon afterwards changed, and the party separated.

On going to the cathedral the following Sunday, I saw the same young man walking with the widow, and found that he was the son for whose safety she had so often prayed. She was accompanied by a very beautiful girl, the Agnes, I supposed, of her son's narrative, and the features of the mother sufficiently told me that her prayers had been heard—her fondest wishes gratified.